Madras University B.A., Examination, 1907.

SELECTIONS FROM

GRAY, COLLINS, BURNS, SHELLEY, WORDSWORTH & TENNYSON

WITH

INTRODUCTIONS AND FULL NOTES

BY

THE LATE R. S. SHEPPARD, B.A.,

and

EDITED, WITH NOTES ON CERTAIN SELECTIONS,

BY

CECIL. M. BARROW, M.A., (Oxon)
Head Master, Bishop Corrie's Grammar School, Madras.

22 JAN
MADRAS

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MADRAS:

PRINTED AT THE KAPALEE PRESS,

305, THUMBOO CHETTY STREET.

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THOMAS GRAY.

1716 — 1771.

The Progress of Poesy.

I. 1.

Awake, Æolian lyre, awake,
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.
From Helicon's harmonious springs
A thousand rills their mazy progress take:
The laughing flowers, that round them blow,
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Now the rich stream of music winds along,
Deep, majestic, smooth and strong,
Thro' verdant vales, and Ceres' golden reign:
Now rolling down the steep amain,
Headlong, impetuous, see it pour;
The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar.

I. 2.

Oh! Sovereign of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell! the sullen Cares
And frantic Passions hear thy soft control.
On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
Has curb'd the fury of his car,
And dropt his thirsty lance at thy command.
Perching on the scepter'd hand

Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feather'd king
With ruffled plumes, and flagging wing:
Quench'd in dark clouds of slumber lie
The terror of his beak, and lightnings of his eye.

I. 3.

Thee the voice, the dance, obey,
Temper'd to thy warbled lay.
O'er Idalia's velvet-green
The rosy-crowned Loves are seen
On Cytherea's day
With antic Sport, and blue-eyed Pleasures,
Frisking light in frolic measures;
Now pursuing, now retreating,
  Now in circling troops they meet;
To brisk notes in cadence beating,
  Glance their many-twinkling feet.
Slow-melting strains their Queen's approach declare:
  Where'er she turns, the Graces homage pay.
With arms sublime, that float upon the air,
  In gliding state she wins her easy way:
O'er her warm cheek, and rising bosom, move
The bloom of young Desire, and purple light of Love.

II. 1.

  Man's feeble race what ills await!
Labour, and Penury, the racks of Pain,
Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,
  And Death, sad refuge from the storms of Fate!
The fond complaint, my Song, disprove,
And justify the laws of Jove.
Say, has he given in vain the heavenly Muse?
Night, and all her sickly dews,

Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry,
He gives to range the dreary sky;
Till down the eastern cliffs afar
Hyperion's march they spy, and glitt'ring shafts of war.

II. 2.

In climes beyond the solar road,
Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,
The Muse has broke the twilight-gloom
To cheer the shivering native's dull abode.
And oft, beneath the odorous shade
Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat,
In loose numbers wildly sweet,
Their feather-cinctur'd chiefs, and dusky loves.
Her track, where'er the Goddess roves,
Glory pursue, and generous Shame,
The unconquerable Mind, and Freedom's holy flame.

II. 3.

Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
Isles, that crown the Ægean deep,
Fields, that cool Ilissus laves,
Or where Mæander's amber waves
In lingering labyrinths creep,
How do your tuneful echoes languish,
Mute, but to the voice of anguish!
Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around;
Every shade and hallow'd fountain
Murmur'd deep a solemn sound;

Till the sad Nine in Greece's evil hour,
Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains.
Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant Power,
And coward Vice, that revels in her chains.
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
They sought, oh Albion! next thy sea-encircled coast.

III. 1.

Far from the sun and summer-gale,
In thy green lap was Nature's Darling laid,
What time, where lucid Avon strayed,
To him the mighty Mother did unveil
Her awful face. The dauntless Child
Stretch'd forth his little arms, and smiled.
This pencil take (she said) whose colours clear
Richly paint the vernal year;
Thine too these golden keys, immortal Boy!
This can unlock the gates of Joy,
Of Horror that, and thrilling Fears,
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic Tears.

III. 2.

Nor second He, that rode sublime
Upon the seraph-wings of Ecstasy,
The secrets of th' Abyss to spy.
He passed the flaming bounds of Place and Time,
The living Throne, the sapphire-blaze,
Where Angels tremble, while they gaze,
He saw; but, blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.
Behold, where Dryden's less presumptuous car,
Wide o'er the fields of Glory bear
Two Coursers of ethereal race,
With necks in thunder cloth'd, and long-resounding pace.

III. 3.

Hark, his hands the lyre explore!
Bright-eyed Fancy, hovering o'er,
Scatters from her pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.
But ah! 'tis heard no more—
Oh! Lyre divine, what daring Spirit
Wakes thee now? tho' he inherit
Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,
That the Theban Eagle bear,
Sailing with supreme dominion
Thro' the azure deep of air;
Yet oft before his infant eyes would run
Such forms as glitter in the Muse's ray,
With orient hues, unborrowed of the Sun;
Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,
Beneath the Good how far—but far above the Great.

The Bard.

I. 1.

"RUIN seize thee, ruthless King!
Confusion on thy banners wait;
Tho' fanned by Conquest's crimson wing,
They mock the air with idle state.
Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail,
Nor even thy virtues, Tyrant, shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears!"
Such were the sounds that o'er the crested pride
Of the first Edward scattered wild dismay,
As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side
He wound with toilsome march his long array.
Stout Glo'ster stood aghast in speechless trance:
"To arms!" cried Mortimer, and couched his quivering lance.

I. 2.

On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
Robed in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the Poet stood
(Loose his beard, and hoary hair
Streamed, like a meteor, to the troubled air),

And with a Master's hand and Prophet's fire
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.
"Hark, how each giant-oak, and desert cave,
Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath!
O'er thee, oh King! their hundred arms they wave,
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe;
Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

I. 3.

"Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hushed the stormy main;
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed;
Mountains, ye mourn in vain
Modred, whose magic song
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topped head.
On dreary Arvon's shore they lie,
Smeared with gore, and ghastly pale;
Far, far aloof th' affrighted ravens sail;
The famished eagle screams, and passes by.
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear, as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear, as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country's cries—
No more I weep. They do not sleep.
On yonder cliffs, a grisly band,
I see them sit, they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land;
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.

II. 1.

"Weave the warp, and weave the woof,
The winding-sheet of Edward's race.
Give ample room, and verge enough
The characters of hell to trace.
Mark the year, and mark the night,
When Severn shall re-echo with affright
The shrieks of death through Berkley's roofs that ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing king!
She-wolf of France, with unrelenting fangs
That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled mate,
From thee be born, who o'er thy country hangs
The scourge of heaven. What terrors round him wait!
Amazement in his van, with Flight combined,
And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude behind.

II. 2.

"Mighty victor, mighty Lord!
Low on his funeral couch he lies!
No pitying heart, no eye, afford
A tear to grace his obsequies.
Is the sable warrior fled?
Thy son is gone. He rests among the dead.
The swarm that in thy noontide beam were born?
Gone to salute the rising morn.
Fair laughs the Morn, and soft the Zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm.
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes;
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm;
Regardless of the sweeping Whirlwind's sway,
That, hushed in grim repose, expects his evening-prey.

II. 3.

"Fill high the sparkling bowl,
The rich repast prepare,
Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast;
Close by the regal chair
Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
A baleful smile upon their baffled guest.
Heard ye the din of battle bray,
Lance to lance, and horse to horse?
Long years of havoc urge their destined course,
And thro' the kindred squadrons mow their way.
Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murther fed,
Revere his Consort's faith, his Father's fame,
And spare the meek Usurper's holy head.
Above, below, the rose of snow,
Twined with her blushing foe, we spread;
The bristled Boar in infant-gore
Wallows beneath the thorny shade.
Now, brothers, bending o'er th' accursed loom,
Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

III. 1.

"Edward lo! to sudden fate
(Weave the woof. The thread is spun.)
Half of thy heart we consecrate.
(The web is wove. The work is done.)
Stay, oh stay! nor thus forlorn
Leave me unblessed, unpitied, here to mourn;
In yon bright track, that fires the western skies,
They melt, they vanish from my eyes.
But oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height

Descending slow their glitt'ring skirts unroll?
Visions of glory, spare my aching sight!
Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul!
No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.
All hail, ye genuine kings, Britannia's issue, hail!

III. 2.

"Girt with many a baron bold
Sublime their starry fronts they rear;
And gorgeous dames, and statesmen old
In bearded majesty, appear.
In the midst a form divine!
Her eye proclaims her of the Briton-line;
Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face,
Attempered sweet to virgin-grace.
What strings symphonious tremble in the air,
What strains of vocal transport round her play!
Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear;
They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
Bright Rapture calls, and soaring, as she sings,
Waves in the eye of Heaven her many-colour'd wings.

III. 3.

"The verse adorn again
Fierce War, and faithful Love,
And Truth severe, by fairy Fiction drest.
In buskined measures move
Pale Grief, and pleasing Pain
With Horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast.
A voice, as of the Cherub-Choir,
Gales from blooming Eden bear;
And distant warblings lessen on my ear,

That lost in long futurity expire.
Fond impious man, think'st thou yon sanguine cloud,
Raised by thy breath, has quenched the orb of day?
To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
And warms the nations with redoubled ray.
Enough for me. With joy I see
The different doom our fates assign.
Be thine Despair, and scepter'd Care,
To triumph and to die are mine."
He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height
Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to endless night.

WILLIAM COLLINS.

1721 — 1756

The Passions.

When Music, heavenly maid, was young
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft, to hear her shell,
Throng'd around her magic cell,
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possest beyond the Muse's painting;
By turns they felt the glowing mind
Disturb'd, delighted, rais'd, refin'd;
Till once, 'tis said, when all were fir'd,
Fill'd with fury, rapt, inspir'd,
From the supporting myrtles round
They snatch'd her instruments of sound;
And, as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each, for madness rul'd the hour,
Would prove his own expressive power.

First Fear, his hand, its skill to try,
  Amid the chords bewilder'd laid,
And back recoil'd, he knew not why,
  Ev'n at the sound himself had made.

Next Anger rush'd; his eyes on fire
In lightnings own'd his secret stings;
In one rude clash he struck the lyre,
And swept with hurried hand the strings.

With woful measures wan Despair
Low sullen sounds, his grief beguil'd,
A solemn, strange, and mingled air;
'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild.

But Thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
What was thy delightful measure?
Still it whisper'd promis'd pleasure,
And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail!
Still would her touch the strain prolong,
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
She call'd on Echo still thro' all the song;
And, where her sweetest theme she chose,
A soft responsive voice was heard at ev'ry close,
And Hope enchanted smil'd, and wav'd her golden hair.
And longer had she sung, but, with a frown,
Revenge impatient rose:
He threw his blood-stain'd sword in thunder down,
And with a with'ring look
The war-denouncing trumpet took,
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe.
And ever and anon he beat
The doubling drum with furious heat;
And tho' sometimes, each dreary pause between,
Dejected Pity at his side
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
Yet still he kept his wild unalter'd mien,

While each strain'd ball of sight seem'd bursting [from his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fix'd,
Sad proof of thy distressful state ;
Of differing themes the veering song was mix'd ;
And now it courted Love, now raving call'd on [Hate.

With eyes up-rais'd, as one inspir'd,
Pale Melancholy sate retir'd,
And from her wild sequester'd seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
Pour'd thro' the mellow horn her pensive soul ;
And, dashing soft from the rocks around,
Bubbling runnels join'd the sound ;
Thro' glades and glooms the mingled measure stole,
Or o'er some haunted stream, with fond delay,
Round an holy calm diffusing,
Love of peace, and lonely musing,
In hollow murmurs died away.

But, O, how alter'd was its sprightlier tone,
When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
Her bow a-cross her shoulder flung,
Her buskins gem'd with morning dew,
Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
The hunter's call to Faun and Dryad known !
The oak-crowned sisters, and their chaste-eyed [Queen,
Satyrs and Sylvan boys, were seen,
Peeping from forth their alleys green ;
Brown Exercise rejoic'd to hear,
And Sport leapt up and seiz'd his beechen spear.
Last came Joy's ecstatic trial :
He, with viny crown advancing,

First to the lively pipe his hand addrest,
But soon he saw the brisk-awak'ning viol,
Whose sweet entrancing voice he lov'd the best;
They would have thought who heard the strain,
They saw in Tempe's vale her native maids,
Amidst the festal sounding shades,
To some unwearied minstrel dancing,
While, as his flying fingers kiss'd the strings,
Love fram'd with Mirth a gay fantastic round;
Loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound;
And he, amidst his frolic play,
As if he would the charming air repay,
Shook thousand odours from his dewy wings.

O Music, sphere-descended maid,
Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid,
Why, Goddess, why, to us deny'd
Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside?
As in that lov'd Athenian bow'r,
You learn'd an all-commanding pow'r,
Thy mimic soul, O Nymph endear'd,
Can well recall what then it heard.
Where is thy native simple heart,
Devote to Virtue, Fancy, Art?
Arise, as in that elder time,
Warm, energic, chaste, sublime!
Thy wonders, in that godlike age,
Fill thy recording Sister's page:
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
Had more of strength, diviner rage,
Than all which charms this laggard age,
Ev'n all at once together found
Cecilia's mingled world of sound.

O bid our vain endeavours cease,
Revive the just designs of Greece!
Return in all thy simple state!
Confirm the tale her sons relate!

Ode to Evening.

If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs, and dying gales;

O nymph reserved, while now the bright hair'd Sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed;

Now air is hush'd, save where the weak-eyed bat,
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing;
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum;
Now teach me, maid composed
To breathe some soften'd strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening vale
May not unseemly with its stillness suit;
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial loved return!

For when thy folding-star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp,
The fragrant Hours, and Elves
Who slept in buds the day,

And many a Nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge,
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,
The pensive Pleasures sweet,
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene;
Or find some ruin 'midst its dreary dells,
Whose walls more awful nod
By thy religious gleams.

Or, if chill blustering winds, or driving rain,
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut,
That from the mountain's side,
Views wilds, and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd spires;
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve!
While summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light;

While sallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves:
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train,
And rudely rends thy robes;

So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And love thy favourite name!

ROBERT BURNS.

1759 — 1796

The Cotter's Saturday Night.

My lov'd, my honour'd, much respected friend!
  No mercenary bard his homage pays:
With honest pride, I scorn each selfish end,
  My dearest meed, a friend's esteem and praise:
To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
  The lowly train in life's sequester'd scene;
The native feelings strong, the guileless ways;
  What Aiken in a cottage would have been; [ween.
Ah! tho' his worth unknown, far happier there, I

November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh;
  The short'ning winter-day is near a close;
The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh;
  The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose:
The toil-worn Cotter frae his labour goes,
  This night his weekly moil is at an end,
Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
  Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend, [bend.
And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hameward

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
  Beneath the shelter of an aged tree;

Th' expectant wee-things, toddlin, stacher through
 To meet their Dad, wi' flichterin noise an' glee.
His wee bit ingle, blinkin' bonilie,
 His clean hearth-stane, his thriftie wifie's smile,
The lisping infant prattling on his knee,
 Does a' his weary carking cares beguile,
An' makes him quite forget his labour an' his toil.

Belyve, the elder bairns come drapping in,
 At service out, amang the farmers roun';
Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie rin
 A cannie errand to a neebor-town:
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman-grown,
 In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her e'e,
Comes hame, perhaps, to shew a braw new gown,
 Or deposite her sair-won penny-fee,
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

Wi' joy unfeign'd brothers and sisters meet,
 An' each for other's weelfare kindly spiers:
The social hours, swift-wing'd, unnotic'd fleet;
 Each tells the uncos that he sees or hears;
The parents, partial, eye their hopeful years;
 Anticipation forward points the view.
The mother, wi' her needle an' her sheers,
 Gars auld claes look amaist as weel's the new;
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

Their master's an' their mistress's command
 The younkers a' are warnéd to obey;
An' mind their labours wi' an eydent hand,
 An' ne'er, tho' out o' sight, to jauk or play:
"An' Oh! be sure to fear the Lord alway,
 An' mind your duty, duley, morn an' night!
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,

Implore His counsel and assisting might:
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord [aright !"

But hark! a rap comes gently to the door;
  Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neebor lad cam o'er the moor,
  To do some errands, and convoy her hame.
The wily mother sees the conscious flame
  Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek;
With heart-struck, anxious care, inquires his name,
  While Jenny hafflins is afraid to speak;
Weel pleas'd the mother hears it's nae wild, worth- [less rake

Wi' kindly welcome Jenny brings him ben;
  A strappan youth; he takes the mother's eye;
Blythe Jenny sees the visit's no ill ta'en;
  The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye.
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,
  But, blate and laithfu', scarce can weel behave;
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
  What makes the youth sae bashfu' an' sae grave;
Weel-pleas'd to think her bairn's respected like the [lave.

O happy love! where love like this is found!
  O heart-felt raptures!—bliss beyond compare!
I've pacéd much this weary, mortal round,
  And sage experience bids me this declare—
'If Heaven a draught of heav'nly pleasure spare,—
  One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving modest pair,
  In other's arms breathe out the tender tale
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the ev'ning [gale.'

Is there, in human form, that bears a heart—
  A wretch! a villain! lost to love and truth!
That can with studied, sly, ensnaring art
  Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?
Curse on his perjur'd arts! dissembling smooth!
  Are honour, virtue, conscience, all exil'd?
Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
  Points to the parents fondling o'er their child?
Then paints the ruin'd maid, and their distraction
[wild!

But now the supper crowns their simple board,
  The halesome parritch, chief o' Scotia's food:
The soupe their only Hawkie does afford,
  That yont the hallen snugly chows her cood;
The dame brings forth, in complimental mood,
  To grace the lad, her weel-hain'd kebbuck, fell,
An' aft he's prest, an' aft he ca's it guid;
  The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell,
How 'twas a towmond auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face
  They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,
  The big ha'-Bible, ance his father's pride:
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
  His lyart haffets wearing thin an' bare;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
  He wales a portion with judicious care;
And 'Let us worship God!' he says, with solemn air.

They chant their artless notes in simple guise;
  They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim;
Perhaps Dundee's wild-warbling measures rise,

Or plaintive Martyrs, worthy of the name;
Or noble Elgin beets the heav'nward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays:
Compar'd with these, Italian trills are tame;
The tickl'd ears no heart-felt raptures raise;
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

The priest-like Father reads the sacred page,
How Abram was the friend of God on high;
Or, Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny:
Or how the royal Bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire;
Or Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire;
Or other holy Seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme;
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed;
How He, who bore in Heaven the second name,
Had not on earth whereon to lay his Head;
How His first followers and servants sped;
The precepts sage they wrote to many a land;
How he, who lone in Patmos banishéd,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand;
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounc'd by Heaven's command.

Then kneeling down, to Heaven's Eternal King
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:—
Hope 'springs exulting on triumphant wing'
That thus they all shall meet in future days:
There ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,

In such society, yet still more dear
While circling Time moves round in an eternal [sphere.

Compar'd with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method, and of art,
When men display to congregations wide,
Devotion's ev'ry grace, except the heart!
The Pow'r, incens'd, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;
But haply, is some cottage far apart,
May hear, well pleas'd, the language of the soul,
And in His Book of Life the inmates poor enroll.

Then homeward all take off their sev'ral way;
The youngling cottagers retire to rest;
The parent pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heav'n the warm request,
That he who stills the raven's clam'rous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
Would, in the way His wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide;
But chiefly in their hearts with grace divine preside.

From scenes like these, old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her lov'd at home, rever'd abroad:
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
'An honest man's the noblest work of God:'
And certes, in fair virtue's heav'nly road,
The cottage leaves the palace far behind;
What is a lordling's pomp? a cumbrous load,
Disguising oft, the wretch of human kind,
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refin'd!

O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!
For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent!

Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content!
And, oh, may Heaven their simple lives prevent
From luxury's contagion weak and vile!
Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
A virtuous populace may rise the while,
And stand a wall of fire around their much-lov'd Isle.

O Thou! who pour'd the patriotic tide
That stream'd thro' Wallace's undaunted heart;
Who dar'd to nobly stem tyrannic pride,
Or nobly die, the second glorious part,
(The patriot's God peculiarly thou art,
His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward!)
O never, never, Scotia's realm desert,
But still the patriot and the patriot-bard
In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard!

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

1792 — 1822

Lines Written among the Euganean Hills.

OCTOBER, 1818.

Many a green isle needs must be
In the deep wide sea of misery,
Or the mariner, worn and wan,
Never thus could voyage on
Day and night, and night and day,
Drifting on his dreary way,
With the solid darkness black
Closing round his vessel's track ;
Whilst above, the sunless sky,
Big with clouds, hangs heavily,
And behind the tempest fleet
Hurries on with lightning feet,
Riving sail, and cord, and plank,
Till the ship has almost drank
Death from the o'er-brimming deep ;
And sinks down, down, like that sleep
When the dreamer seems to be
Weltering through eternity ;
And the dim low line before
Of a dark and a distant shore
Still recedes, as ever still

Longing with divided will;
But no power to seek or shun,
He is ever drifted on
O'er the unreposing wave
To the haven of the grave.
What, if there no friends will greet;
What, if there no heart will meet
His with love's impatient beat;
Wander wheresoe'er he may,
Can he dream before that day
To find refuge from distress
In friendship's smile, in love's caress?
Then 'twill wreak him little woe
Whether such there be or no:
Senseless is the breast, and cold,
Which relenting love would fold;
Bloodless are the veins and chill
Which the pulse of pain did fill:
Every little living nerve
That from bitter words did swerve
Round the tortured lips and brow,
Are like sapless leaflets now
Frozen upon December's bough.

On the beach of a northern sea
Which tempests shake eternally,
As once the wretch there lay to sleep,
Lies a solitary heap,
One white skull and seven dry bones,
On the margin of the stones,
Where a few grey rushes stand,
Boundaries of the sea and land:
Nor is heard one voice of wail

But the sea-mews, as they sail
O'er the billows of the gale;
Or the whirlwind up and down
Howling like a slaughtered town,
When a king in glory rides
Through the pomp of fratricides:
Those unburied bones around
There is many a mournful sound;
There is no lament for him,
Like a sunless vapour, dim,
Who once clothed with life and thought
What now moves nor murmurs not.

Ay, many flowering islands lie
In the waters of wide Agony:
To such a one this morn was led,
My bark, by soft winds piloted.
'Mid the mountains Euganean,
I stood listening to the pæan
With which the legioned rooks did hail
The sun's uprise majestical;
Gathering round with wings all hoar,
Through the dewy mist they soar
Like grey shades, till the eastern heaven
Bursts, and then, as clouds of even,
Flecked with fire and azure, lie
In the unfathomable sky,
So their plumes of purple grain,
Starred with drops of golden rain,
Gleam above the sunlight woods,
As in silent multitudes
On the morning's fitful gale
Through the broken mist they sail;

And the vapours cloven and gleaming
Follow down the dark steep streaming,
Till all is bright, and clear, and still,
Round the solitary hill.
Beneath is spread like a green sea
The waveless plain of Lombardy,
Bounded by the vaporous air,
Islanded by cities fair;
Underneath day's azure eyes
Ocean's nursling, Venice, lies,—
A peopled labyrinth of walls,
Amphitrite's destined halls,
Which her hoary sire now paves
With his blue and beaming waves.
Lo! the sun upsprings behind,
Broad, red, radiant, half-reclined
On the level quivering line
Of the waters crystalline;
And before that chasm of light,
As within a furnace bright,
Column, tower, and dome, and spire,
Shine like obelisks of fire,
Pointing with inconstant motion
From the altar of dark ocean
To the sapphire-tinted skies;
As the flames of sacrifice
From the marbled shrines did rise
As to pierce the dome of gold
Where Apollo spoke of old.

Sun-girt City! thou hast been
Ocean's child, and then his queen
Now is come a darker day,

And thou soon must be his prey,
If the power that raised thee here
Hallow so thy watery bier.
A less drear ruin then than now,
With thy conquest-branded brow
Stooping to the slave of slaves
From thy throne, among the waves,
Wilt thou be, when the sea-mew
Flies, as once before it flew,
O'er thine isles depopulate,
And all is in its ancient state,
Save where many a palace-gate
With green sea-flowers over grown
Like a rock of ocean's own,
Topples o'er the abandon'd sea
As the tides change sullenly.
The fisher on his watery way,
Wandering at the close of day,
Will spread his sail and seize his oar,
Till he pass the gloomy shore,
Lest thy dead should, from their sleep
Bursting o'er the starlight deep,
Lead a rapid masque of death
O'er the waters of his path.

Those who alone thy towers behold
Quivering through aërial gold,
As I now behold them here,
Would imagine not they were
Sepulchres, where human forms,
Like pollution-nourish'd worms,
To the corpse of greatness cling,
Murdered, and now mouldering:
But if Freedom should awake

In her omnipotence, and shake
From the Celtic Anarch's hold
All the keys of dungeons cold,
Where a hundred cities lie
Chained like thee, ingloriously,
Thou and all thy sister band
Might adorn this sunny land,
Twining memories of old time
With new virtues more sublime;
If not, perish thou and they;
Clouds which stain Truth's rising day
By her sun consumed away,
Earth can spare ye; while like flowers,
In the waste of years and hours,
From your dust new nations spring
With more kindly blossoming.

Perish! let there only be
Floating o'er thy hearthless sea,
As the garment of thy sky
Clothes the world immortally,
One remembrance, more sublime
Than the tattered pall of Time,
Which scarce hides thy visage wan:
That a tempest-cleaving swan
Of the songs of Albion,
Driven from his ancestral streams,
By the might of evil dreams,
Found a nest in thee; and Ocean
Welcomed him with such emotion
That its joy grew his, and sprung
From his lips like music flung
O'er a mighty thunder-fit,
Chastening terror: what though yet

Poesy's unfailing river,
Which through Albion winds for ever,
Lashing with melodious wave
Many a sacred poet's grave,
Mourn its latest nursling fled!
What though thou with all thy dead
Scarce can for this fame repay
Aught thine own,—oh, rather say,
Though thy sins and slaveries foul
Overcloud a sunlike soul!
As the ghost of Homer clings
Round Scamander's wasting springs;
As divinest Shakspeare's might
Fills Avon and the world with light,
Like omniscient power, which he
Imaged 'mid mortality;
As the love from Petrarchs urn,
Yet amid yon hills doth burn,
A quenchless lamp, by which the heart
Sees things unearthly; so thou art,
Mighty spirit: so shall be
The city that did refuge thee.

Lo, the sun floats up the sky,
Like thought-winged Liberty,
Till the universal light
Seems to level plain and height;
From the sea a mist has spread,
And the beams of morn lie dead
On the towers of Venice now,
Like its glory long ago.
By the skirts of that grey cloud
Many-domed Padua proud

Stands, a peopled solitude,
'Mid the harvest-shining plain,
Where the peasant heaps his grain
In the garner of his foe,
And the milk-white oxen slow
With the purple vintage strain,
Heaped upon the creaking wain,
That the brutal Celt may swill
Drunken sleep with savage will;
And the sickle to the sword
Lies unchanged, though many a lord,
Like a weed whose shade is poison,
Overgrows this region's foison,
Sheaves of whom are ripe to come
To destruction's harvest-home:
Men must reap the things they sow,
Force from force must ever flow,
Or worse; but 'tis a bitter woe
That love or reason cannot change
The despot's rage, the slave's revenge.
Padua, thou within whose walls
Those mute guests at festivals,
Son and Mother, Death and Sin,
Played at dice for Ezzelin,
Till death cried, "I win, I win!"
And Sin cursed to lose the wager,
But Death promised, to assuage her,
That he would petition for
Her to be made Vice-Emperor,
When the destined years were o'er,
Over all between the Po
And the eastern Alpine snow,
Under the mighty Austrian.

Sin smiled so as Sin only can,
And since that time, ay, long before,
Both have ruled from shore to shore.
That incestuous pair, who follow
Tyrants as the sun the swallow,
As Repentance follows Crime,
And as changes follow Time.

In thine halls the lamp of learning,
Padua, now no more is burning ;
Like a meteor, whose wild way
Is lost over the grave of day,
It gleams betrayed and to betray :
Once remotest nations came
To adore that sacred flame,
When it lit not many a hearth
On this cold and gloomy earth ;
Now new fires from Antique light
Spring beneath the wide world's might :
But their spark lies dead in thee,
Trampled out by tyranny.
As the Norway woodman quells,
In the depth of piny dells,
One light flame among the brakes,
While the boundless forest shakes,
And its mighty trunks are torn
By the fire thus lowly born ;
The spark beneath his feet is dead,
He starts to see the flames it fed
Howling through the darkened sky
With a myriad tongues victoriously,
And skins down in fear : so thou,
O tyranny ! beholdest now
Light around thee, and thou hearest

The loud flames ascend, and fearest :
Grovel on the earth ; ay, hide
In the dust thy purple pride !
Noon descends around me now :
'Tis the noon of autumn's glow,
When a soft and purple mist
Like a vaporous amethyst,
Or an air-dissolved star
Mingling light and fragrance, far
From the curved horizon's bound
To the point of heaven's profound,
Fills the overflowing sky ;
And the plains that silent lie
Underneath ; the leaves unsodden
Where the infant frost has trodden
With his morning-winged feet,
Whose bright print is gleaming yet ;
And the red and golden vines,
Piercing with their trellised lines
The rough, dark-skirted wilderness ;
The dun and bladed grass no less,
Pointing from this hoary tower
In the windless air ; the flower
Glimmering at my feet ; the line
Of the olive-sandalled Apennine
In the south dimly islanded ;
And the Alps, whose snows are spread
High between the clouds and sun ;
And of living things each one ;
And my spirit, which so long
Darkened this swift stream of song,
Interpenetrated lie
By the glory of the sky ;

Be it love, light, harmony,
Odour, of the soul of all
Which from heaven like dew doth fall,
Or the mind which feeds this verse
Peopling the lone universe.
Noon descends, and after noon
Autumn's evening meets me soon,
Leading the infantine moon,
And that one star, which to her
Almost seems to minister
Half the crimson light she brings
From the sunset's radiant springs:
And the soft dreams of the morn
(Which like winged winds had borne
To that silent isle, which lies
'Mid remembered agonies,
The frail bark of this lone being),
Pass, to other sufferers fleeing,
And its ancient pilot, Pain,
Sits beside the helm again.
Other flowering isles must be
In the sea of life and agony:
Other spirits float and flee
O'er that gulf: even now, perhaps,
On some rock the wild wave wraps,
With folding wings they waiting sit
For my bark, to pilot it
To some calm and blooming cove,
Where for me, and those I love,
May a windless bower be built,
Far from passion, pain, and guilt,
In a dell 'mid lawny hills,
Which the wild sea-murmur fills,

And soft sunshine, and the sound
Of old forests echoing round,
And the light and smell divine
Of all flowers that breathe and shine.
We may live so happy there,
That the spirits of the air,
Envying us, may even entice
To our healing paradise
The polluting multitude;
But their rage would be subdued
By that clime devine and calm,
And the winds whose wings rain balm
On the uplifted soul, and leaves
Under which the bright sea heaves;
While each breathless interval
In their whisperings musical
The inspired soul supplies
With its own deep melodies;
And the love which heals all strife
Circling, like the breath of life,
All things in that sweet abode
With its own mild brotherhood.
They, not it, would change; and soon
Every sprite beneath the moon
Would repent its envy vain,
And the earth grow young again.

To a Skylark.

Hail to thee, blithe spirit!
  Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it,
  Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher,
  From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
  The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
  Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are brightening,
  Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
  Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven,
  In the broad day-light
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight.

Keen as are the arrows
  Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
  In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aërial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,

Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged thieves.]

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard,
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,
Or triumphal chaunt,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt—
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
  Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
  Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
  And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
  With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
  Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
  Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
  Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
  That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
  That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
  From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

The Sensitive Plant.

PART I.

A Sensitive Plant in a garden grew,
And the young winds fed it with silver dew,
And it opened its fan-like leaves to the light,
And closed them beneath the kisses of night.

And the spring arose on the garden fair,
And the Spirit of Love fell everywhere ;
And each flower and herb on Earth's dark breast
Rose from the dreams of its wintry rest.

But none ever trembled and panted with bliss
In the garden, the field, or the wilderness,
Like a doe in the noon-tide with love's sweet want,
As the companionless Sensitive Plant.

The snowdrop, and then the violet,
Arose from the ground with warm rain wet,
And their breath was mixed with fresh odour, sent
From the turf, like the voice and the instrument.

Then the pied wind-flowers and the tulip tall,
And narcissi, the fairest among them all,
Who gaze on their eyes in the stream's recess,
Till they die of their own dear loveliness.

And the Naiad-like lily of the vale,
Whom youth makes so fair and passion so pale,

That the light of its tremulous bells is seen
Through their pavilions of tender green;

And the hyacinth purple, and white, and blue,
Which flung from its bells a sweet peal anew
Of music so delicate, soft, and intense,
It was felt like an odour within the sense;

And the rose like a nymph to the bath addrest,
Which unveiled the depth of her glowing breast,
Till, fold after fold, to the fainting air
The soul of her beauty and love lay bare;

And the wand-like lily, which lifted up,
As a Mænad, its moonlight-coloured cup,
Till the fiery star, which is its eye,
Gazed through the clear dew on the tender sky;

And the jessamine faint, and the sweet tuberose,
The sweetest flower for scent that blows;
And all rare blossoms from every clime
Grew in that garden in perfect prime.

And on the stream whose inconstant bosom
Was prankt, under boughs of embowering blossom,
With golden and green light, slanting through
Their heaven of many a tangled hue,

Broad water-lilies lay tremulously,
And starry river-buds glimmered by,
And around them the soft stream did glide and dance
With a motion of sweet sound and radiance.

And the sinuous paths of lawn and of moss,
Which led through the garden along and across,
Some open at once to the sun and the breeze,
Some lost among bowers of blossoming trees,

Were all paved with daisies and delicate bells,
As fair as the fabulous asphodels,
And flowerets which drooping as day drooped too,
Fell into pavilions, white, purple, and blue,
To roof the glow-worm from the evening dew.

And from this undefiled Paradise
The flowers (as an infant's awakening eyes
Smile on its mother, whose singing sweet
Can first lull, and at last must awaken it),

When Heaven's blithe winds had unfolded them,
As mine-lamps enkindle a hidden gem,
Shone smiling to heaven, and every one
Shared joy in the light of the gentle sun;

For each one was interpenetrated
With the light and the odour its neighbour shed,
Like young lovers whom youth and love make dear,
Wrapped and filled by their mutual atmosphere.

But the Sensitive Plant, which could give small fruit
Of the love which it felt from the leaf to the root,
Received more than all, it loved more than ever,
Where none wanted but it, could belong to the giver—

For the Sensitive Plant has no bright flower;
Radiance and odour are not its dower;
It loves, even like Love, its deep heart is full,
It desires what it has not, the beautiful!

The light winds, which from unsustaining wings
Shed the music of many murmurings;
The beams which dart from many a star
Of the flowers whose hues they bear afar;

The plumed insects swift and free,
Like golden boats on a sunny sea,
Laden with light and odour, which pass
Over the gleam of the living grass;

The unseen clouds of the dew, which lie
Like fire in the flowers till the sun rides high,
Then wander like spirits among the spheres,
Each cloud faint with the fragrance it bears;

The quivering vapours of dim noontide,
Which, like a sea, o'er the warm earth glide,
In which every sound, and odour, and beam,
Move, as reeds in a single stream;

Each and all like ministering angels were
For the Sensitive Plant sweet joy to bear,
Whilst the lagging hours of the day went by
Like windless clouds o'er a tender sky.

And when evening descended from heaven above,
And the earth was all rest, and the air was all love,
And delight, though less bright, was far more deep,
And the day's veil fell from the world of sleep,

And the beasts, and the birds, and the insects were [drowned
In an ocean of dreams without a sound;
Whose waves never mark, though they ever impress
The light sand which paves it, consciousness;

(Only overhead the sweet nightingale
Ever sang more sweet as the day might fail,
And snatches of its Elysian chant
Were mixed, with the dreams of the Sensitive Plant).

The Sensitive Plant was the earliest
Up-gathered into the bosom of rest;
A sweet child weary of its delight,
The feeblest and yet the favourite,
Cradled within the embrace of night.

PART II.

There was a power in this sweet place,
An Eve in this Eden; a ruling grace
Which to the flowers, did they waken or dream,
Was as God is to the starry scheme.

A Lady, the wonder of her kind,
Whose form was upborne by a lovely mind,
Which, dilating, had moulded her mien and motion
Like a sea-flower unfolded beneath the ocean,

Tended the garden from morn to even:
And the meteors of that sublunar heaven,
Like the lamps of the air when night walks forth,
Laughed round her footsteps up from the Earth!

She had no companion of mortal race,
But her tremulous breath and her flushing face
Told whilst the morn kissed the sleep from her eyes,
That her dreams were less slumber than Paradise:

As if some bright Spirit for her sweet sake
Had deserted heaven while the stars were awake,
As if yet around her he lingering were,
Though the veil of daylight concealed him from her.

Her step seemed to pity the grass it prest:
You might hear, by the heaving of her breast,

That the coming and the going of the wind
Brought pleasure there and left passion behind.

And wherever her airy footstep trod,
Her trailing hair from the grassy sod
Erased its light vestige, with shadowy sweep,
Like a sunny storm o'er the dark green deep.

I doubt not the flowers of that garden sweet
Rejoiced in the sound of her gentle feet;
I doubt not they felt the spirit that came
From her glowing fingers through all their frame.

She sprinkled bright water from the stream
On those that were faint with the sunny beam;
And out of the cups of the heavy flowers
She emptied the rain of the thunder showers.

She lifted their heads with her tender hands,
And sustained them with rods and osier bands;
If the flowers had been her own infants, she
Could never have nursed them more tenderly.

And all killing insects and gnawing worms,
And things of obscene and unlovely forms,
She bore in a basket of Indian woof,
Into the rough woods far aloof,

In a basket, of grasses and wild flowers full,
The freshest her gentle hands could pull
For the poor banished insects, whose intent,
Although they did ill, was innocent.

But the bee and the beamlike ephemeris,
Whose path is the lightning's, and soft moths that kiss
The sweet lips of the flowers, and harm not, did she
Make her attendant angels be.

And many an antenatal tomb,
Where butterflies dream of the life to come,
She left clinging round the smooth and dark
Edge of the odorous cedar bark.

This fairest creature from earliest spring
Thus moved through the garden ministering
All the sweet season of summer tide,
And ere the first leaf looked brown—she died!

PART III.

THREE days the flowers of the garden fair,
Like stars when the moon is awakened, were,
Or the waves of the Baiæ, ere luminous
She floats up through the smoke of Vesuvius.

And on the forth, the Sensitive Plant
Felt the sound of the funeral chant,
And the steps of the bearers, heavy and slow,
And the sobs of the mourners, deep and low;

The weary sound and the heavy breath,
And the silent motions of passing death,
And the smell, cold, oppressive, and dank,
Sent through the pores of the coffin plank;

The dark grass, and the flowers among the grass,
Were bright with tears as the crowd did pass;
From their sighs the wind caught a mournful tone,
And sate in the pines and gave groan for groan.

The garden, once fair, became cold and foul,
Like the corpse of her who had been its soul:
Which at first was lovely as if in sleep,
Then slowly changed, till it grew a heap
To make men tremble who never weep.

Swift summer into the autumn flowed,
And frost in the midst of the morning rode,
Through the noon-day sun looked clear and bright,
Mocking the spoil of the secret night.

The rose-leaves, like flakes of crimson snow,
Paved the turf and the moss below.
The lilies were drooping, and white, and wan,
Like the head and the skin of a dying man,

And Indian plants, of scent and hue
The sweetest that ever were fed on dew,
Leaf after leaf, day by day,
Were massed into the common clay.

And the leaves, brown, yellow, and grey, and red,
And white with the whiteness of what is dead,
Like troops of ghosts on the dry wind past;
Their whistling noise made the birds aghast.

And the gusty winds waked the winged seeds
Out of their birth-place of ugly weeds,
Till they clung round many a sweet flower's stem,
Which rotted into the earth with them.

The water-blooms under the rivulet
Fell from the stalks on which they were set;
And the eddies drove them here and there,
As the winds did those of the upper air.

Then the rain came down, and the broken stalks
Were bent and tangled across the walk;
And the leafless net-work of parasite bowers
Massed into ruin, and all sweet flowers.

Between the time of the wind and the snow,
All loathliest weeds began to grow,
Whose coarse leaves were splashed with many a speck,
Like the water-snake's belly and the toad's back. 227

And thistles, and nettles, and darnels rank,
And the dock, and henbane, and hemlock dank,
Stretch'd out its long and hollow shank,
And stifled the air till the dead wind stank.
And plants, at whose names the verse feels loath,
Filled the place with a monstrous undergrowth, 233

Prickly, and pulpous, and blistering, and blue,
Livid, and starred with a lurid dew.
And agarics and fungi, with mildew and mould,
Started like mist from the wet ground cold; 237

Pale, fleshy, as if the decaying dead
With a spirit of growth had been animated!
Spawn, weeds, and filth, a leprous scum,
Made the running rivulet thick and dumb, 241

And at its outlet, flags huge as stakes
Dammed it up with roots knotted like water-snakes.
And hour by hour, when the air was still,
The vapours arose which have strength to kill: 245

At morn they were seen, at noon they were felt,
At night they were darkness no star could melt.
And unctuous meteors from spray to spray
Crept and fitted in broad noon-day 249

Unseen; every branch on which they alit
By a venomous blight was burned and bit.
The Sensitive Plant, like one forbid,
Wept; and the tears within each lid 253

Of its folded leaves which together grew,
Were changed to a blight of frozen glue.
For the leaves soon fell, and the branches soon
By the heavy axe of the blast were hewn;

The sap shrank to the root through every pore,
As blood to a heart that will beat no more.
For Winter came: the wind was his whip;
One choppy finger was on his lip:

He had torn the cataracts from the hills,
And they clanked at his girdle like manacles;
His breath was a chain which without a sound
The earth, and the air, and the water bound;

He came, fiercely driven in his chariot-throne
By the tenfold blasts of the arctic zone.
Then the weeds which were forms of living death,
Fled from the frost to the earth beneath:

Their decay and sudden flight from frost
Was but like the vanishing of a ghost!
And under the roots of the Sensitive Plant
The moles and the dormice died for want:

The birds dropped stiff from the frozen air,
And were caught in the branches naked and bare.
First there came down a thawing rain,
And its dull drops froze on the boughs again,

Then there steamed up a freezing dew
Which to the drops of the thaw-rain grew;
And a northern whirlwind, wandering about
Like a wolf that had smelt a dead child out,

Shook the boughs thus laden, and heavy and stiff,
And snapped them off with his rigid griff.
When winter had gone and spring came back,
The Sensitive Plant was a leafless wreck;
But the mandrakes, and toadstools, and docks, and
[darnels,
Rose like the dead from their ruined charnels.

CONCLUSION.

Whether the Sensitive Plant, or that
Which within its boughs like a spirit sat,
Ere its outward form had known decay
Now felt this change, I cannot say.

Whether that lady's gentle mind,
No longer with the form combined
Which scattered love, as stars do light,
Found sadness, where it left delight,

I dare not guess; but in this life
Of error, ignorance and strife.
Where nothing is, but all things seem,
And we the shadows of the dream,

It is a modest creed, and yet
Pleasant, if one considers it,
To own that death itself must be,
Like all the rest, a mockery.

That garden sweet, that lady fair,
And all sweet shapes and odours there,
In truth have never passed away:
'Tis we, 'tis ours, are changed! not they.

For love, and beauty, and delight,
There is no death nor change; their might
Exceeds our organs, which endure
No light, being themselves obscure.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

1770 — 1854

Tintern Abbey.

Five years have past, five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a soft inland murmur.—Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard tufts.
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration:—feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime: that blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened:—that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft—
In darkness and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir

Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!
And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again;
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led: more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads, than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all—I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy rapture. Not for this

Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye, and ear,—both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognise
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay:
For thou art with me here upon the banks
Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend; and in the voice I catch

The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us or disturb
Our cheerful faith that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain-winds be free
To blow against thee: and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance—
If I should be were I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
Of past existence—wilt thou then forget

That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service: rather say
With warmer love—oh! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs.
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake!

Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of early Childhood.

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it has been of yore;
Turn whereso'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

The rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the rose;
The moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief;
And I again am strong.

The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,
The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every beast keep holiday;
Thou child of joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
shepherd-boy!

Ye blessed creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal;
The fullness of your bliss, I feel I feel it all.
Oh evil day! if I were sullen
While the earth herself is adorning,
This sweet May morning;
And the children are culling,
On every side,
In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm
And the babe leaps up on his mother's arm;—
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
But there's a tree, of many, one,
A single field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone;
The pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat;

Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

Our birth is but a sleep amd a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home;
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way atttended;
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely nurse doth all she can
To make her foster-child, her inmate man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

Behold the child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' darling of a pigmy size!

See, where mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art;
A wedding or a festival;
A mourning or a funeral;
And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song;
Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride
The little actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'
With all the persons, down to palsied age,
That Life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy soul's immensity;
Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage; thou eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent readest the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy immortality

Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave,
A presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live;
That Nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction; not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blessed,
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts, before which our mortal nature,
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised;
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,

Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
Are yet a master-light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal silence; truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor man nor boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence, in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither;
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then, sing ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!
We, in thought, will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright,
Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind,
In the primal sympathy
Which having been, must ever be;

In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And O ye fountains, meadows, hills, and groves,
Forbode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquished one delight,
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the brooks, which down their channels fret,
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;
The innocent brightness of a new-born day
Is lovely yet;
The clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live;
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys and fears;
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

NOTES.

THOMAS GRAY.

INTRODUCTION.

I.—Life of Gray.

Thomas Gray was born at Cornhill, London, December 26, 1716. His father, Philip Gray, was a money-scrivener—the same occupation carried on by Milton's father; but though a 'respectable citizen,' the parent of Gray was a man of harsh and violent disposition. His wife was forced to separate from him; and it was to the exertions of this excellent woman, as partner with her sister in a millinery business, that the poet owed the advantages of a learned education, first at Eton, and afterwards at Cambridge. The painful domestic circumstances of his youth gave a tinge of melancholy and pensive reflection to Gray, which is visible in his poetry. At Eton the young student had made the friendship of Horace Walpole, son of the Prime Minister; and when his college education was completed, Walpole induced him to accompany him in a tour through France and Italy. They had been about a twelvemonth together, exploring the natural beauties, antiquities, and picture-galleries of Rome, Florence, Naples, &c., when a quarrel took place between them at Reggio and the travellers separated, Gray returning to England. Walpole took the blame of this difference on himself, as he was vain and volatile, and not disposed to trust in the better knowledge and the somewhat fastidious tastes and habits of his associate. Gray went to Cambridge, to take his degree in Civil Law, but without intending to follow up the profession. His father had died, his mother's fortune was small, and the poet was more intent on learning than on riches. He fixed his residence at Cambridge; and amidst its noble libraries and learned society, passed the greater part of his remaining life. He hated

mathematical and metaphysical pursuits, but was ardently devoted to classical learning, to which he added the study of architecture, antiquities, natural history, and other branches of knowledge. His retired life was varied by occasional residence in London, where he revelled among the treasures of the British Museum, and by frequent excursions to the country on visits to a few learned and attached friends. At Cambridge, Gray was considered as an unduly fastidious man, and this gave occasion to practical jokes being played off upon him by his fellow-inmates of St. Peter's College, one of which—a false alarm of fire, by which he was induced to descend from his window to the ground by a rope—was the cause of his removing (1756) to Pembroke Hall. In 1765, he took a journey into Scotland, and met his brother-poet, Dr. Beattie, at Glammis Castle. He also penetrated into Wales, and made a journey to Cumberland and Westmoreland, to see the scenery of the Lakes. His letters describing these excursions are remarkable for elegance and precision, for correct and extensive observation, and for a dry scholastic humour peculiar to the poet. On returning from these agreeable holidays, Gray set himself calmly down in his college retreat—pored over his favourite authors, compiled tables of chronology or botany, moralised 'on all he felt and all he saw' in correspondence with his friends, and occasionally ventured into the realms of poetry and imagination. He had studied the Greek poets with such intense devotion and critical care, that their spirit and essence seem to have sunk into his mind, and coloured all his efforts at original composition. At the same time, his knowledge of human nature, and his sympathy with the world were varied and profound. Tears fell unbidden among the classic flowers of fancy, and in his almost monastic cell his heart vibrated to the finest tones of humanity.

Gray's first public appearance as a poet was made in 1747, when his *Ode to Eton College* was published by Dodsley. It was, however, written in 1742, as also the *Ode to Spring*. In 1751, his *Elegy written in a Country Churchyard* was printed, and immediately became popular. His *Pindaric Odes* appeared in 1757, but met with little success. His name, however, was now so well known, that he was offered the situation of Poet-Laureate, vacant by the death of Colley Cibber. Gray declined the appointment; but shortly afterwards he obtained the more

reputable and lucrative situation of Professor of Modern History, which brought him in about £400 per annum. For some years he had been subject to hereditary gout, and as his circumstances improved, his health declined. While at dinner one day in the college-hall, he was seized with an attack in the stomach, which was so violent as to resist all the efforts of medicine, and after six days of suffering, he expired on the 30th of July 1771, in the fifty-fifth year of his age. He was buried, according to his desire, by the side of his mother, at Stoke Pogis, near Windsor—adding one more poetical association to that beautiful and classic district of England.........

In the character of Gray there are some seeming inconsistencies. As a man, he was nice, reserved, and proud—a haughty, retired scholar; yet we find him, in his letters, full of English idiom and English feeling, with a spice of the gossip, and sometimes not over-fastidious in his allusions and remarks. He was indolent, yet a severe student—hating Cambridge and its college discipline, yet constantly residing there. He loved intellectual ease and luxury, and wished, as a sort of Mohammedan paradise, to "lie on a sofa, and read eternal new romances of Merivaux and Crebillon." Yet all he could say of Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*, when it was first published, was, that there were some good verses in it! Akenside, too, whom he was so well fitted to appreciate, he thought "often obscure, and even unintelligible." As a poet, Gray studied in the school of the ancient and Italian poets, labouring like an artist to infuse part of their spirit, their melody, and even some of their expressions, into his inimitable mosaic work, over which he breathed the life and fragrance of eternal spring. In his country tours, the poet carried with him a plano-convex mirror, which, in surveying landscapes, gathers into one confined glance the forms and tints of the surrounding scene. His imagination performed a similar operation in collecting, fixing, and appropriating the materials of poetry. All is bright, natural, and interesting—rich, or magnificent—but it is seen but for a moment. Yet, despite his classic taste and models, Gray was among the first to welcome and admire the Celtic strains of Macpherson's *Ossian;* and he could also delight in the wild superstitions of the Gothic nations; in translating from the Norse tongue the *Fatal Sisters* and the *Descent of Odin*, he called up the

martial fire, the rude energy and abruptness of the ancient ballad minstrels. Had his situation and circumstances been different, the genius of this accomplished and admirable poet would in all probability have expanded, so as to embrace subjects of wider and more varied interest—of greater length and diversity of character.—*Chambers.*

II.—Critical Observations on the "Elegy," and on Gray's Poems generally.

[*From Leslie Stephen's " Hours in a Library."*]

Gray represents a vein of sentiment allied to some modern modes of thought, and generally regarded as antipathetic to the spirit of his own time. With all his popularity, he appears to be an isolated phenomenon. Everybody knows his poetry by heart. The 'Elegy' has so worked itself into the popular imagination that it includes more familiar phrases than almost any poem of equal length in the language. The 'Bard' and the lines upon Eton have become so hackneyed as perhaps to acquire a certain tinge of banality. If few English poets have written so little, none certainly has written so little that has fallen into oblivion. And yet, though Gray is in this sense the most popular poet of his day, though he is more read than Young, or Thomson, or Collins, or Goldsmith, or many others, we do not think of him as stamping his image upon the time. He stands apart. His poetry is taken to be like an oasis in the desert; it is a sudden spring of perennial freshness gushing out in the midst of that dreary, didactic argumentative, monotonous current of versification poured forth by the imitators of Pope. He never used Pope's measure for serious purposes, except in one fine fragment——the least read of his poems—and is, as it were, an outsider in the literature of the time. And yet, again, it must be remembered that Wordsworth picked him out for special condemnation as the worst offender in the use of conventional language. He definitely accepted and has enlarged upon the theory which Wordsworth attempted to upset—that poetry should use a language differing from that of common life. Indeed, he gets upon stilts as deliberately and

consciously as any poet of the day, and is nervously sensitive to the risk of a lapse into the vernacular.

It would be easy to give a paradoxical turn to these remarks, and to show how Gray was at once the opponent and the representative of the poetical creed of his day. The puzzle such as it is, arises from our habit of absurdly exaggerating the difference between ourselves and our grandfathers, and speaking as if everybody was 'artificial' in the reign of Pope, and 'natural' in the reign of Wordsworth. No two words in the language cover more confusion of thought than those famous phrases. It would be easy enough to twist them so as to prove that Wordsworth was more artificial than Pope, quite as clearly as the opposite is so often demonstrated; and, for my part, I am fully convinced that there was just as much human nature and as little affectation in the days of Queen Anne as in those of Victoria or in those of Elizabeth. The contrast usually drawn has, I doubt not, an important meaning; but it is so obscured by the vague talk about 'nature' that I never see the word without instinctively putting myself on my guard against some bit of slipshod criticism or sham philosophy. I heartily wish that the word could be turned out of the language. Though that, alas! is impossible, we may try to avoid the misleading association which it continually introduces. Gray, at any rate, was a human being who liked looking at trees and hills as much as anybody does now; and he certainly succeeded in writing some verses which concentrate into a couple of pages a depth of genuine emotion such as would furnish whole volumes of modern verbiage. It is another question whether he ought to be called a natural or an artificial poet.

In the first place, however, it may be observed that Gray was not so solitary a phenomenon as we might at first sight fancy. He never entered the circle of literary men who lived in London, and who, in the later part of his career, acknowledged Johnson as their dictator. He shrank from the roughness of the 'great bear,' who, in his turn, seems to have despised Gray as a literary fop—a finikin and affected spinner of verses, who tried to be grand and succeeded only in being pompous and obscure. Gray, in his quiet cloister, led the life of a recluse and followed his own fancies with little direct reference to the public opinion of accepted dispensers of literary reputation....

The want of harmony between Gray and his surroundings goes far to explain his singular want of fertility. In fact, we may say—without any want of respect for a venerable institution—that Gray could hardly have found a more uncongenial residence...............to be shut up in a small scholastic clique, however little he might respect their individual merits, to have the chat of combination rooms ever in his ears, to be worried by bands of professional critics at every turn, was as though a singing bird should build over a wasp's nest. The 'Elegy' and the 'Odes' just struggled into existence, though much of them was written before he settled down as a resident; but Gray, like many another don of great abilities, finished but a minute fragment of the work of which he more or less contemplated the execution. The books contemplated but never carried out by men in his position would make a melancholy and extensive catalogue. The effect of those influences upon his work is palpable to every reader of Gray. No English poet has ever given more decisive proof that he shared that secret of clothing even an obvious thought in majestic and resounding language, which we naturally call Miltonic. Though he modestly asserts that he inherits

> Nor the pride nor ample pinion
> That the Theban eagle bear,
> Sailing with supreme dominion
> Through the azure deep of air,

yet we feel that none of his contemporaries—perhaps none of his successors—could have equalled in dignity, and richness of style, the noble passage in which that phrase occurs. And yet we must also feel that if his 'car,' as he says of Dryden's, is borne by 'coursers of ethereal race,' they are constantly checked before they can get into full career. He takes flight as if the azure deep were the natural home in which he could sail suspended like the eagle without perceptible effort. But the wings droop before they are well unfurled, and the magnificent strain ceases without giving the promised satisfaction. Even the 'Elegy' flags a little towards the end; the 'hoary-headed swain' becomes rather flat in his remarks, and the concluding epitaph has just a little too much twang of epigrammatic smartness. I sometimes agree, indeed, with Wolfe, that it was a far greater achievement to write the 'Elegy' than to storm the heights of Abraham, and then hold

(though I also incline to a different opinion) that only a soldier, or author, or civilian of ultra-military enthusiasm could suppose that such a comparison involved condescension on the side of the general. Gray and his personal admirers seem to have been annoyed at the preference given to this above his other writings. It proved, so he argued, that the stupid public cared for the subject instead of the art; that they liked the 'Elegy' as they liked Blair's 'Grave,' and would have liked it as well if the same thoughts had been expressed in prose. Undoubtedly the public will always refuse to make that distinction between form and matter which seems so important to the critical mind. It is not, however, that they are unaffected by the artistic skill, but that they are affected unconsciously. The meditations of Blair, of Young, and of Hervey, equally popular in their day, have fallen into disrepute for want of the exquisite felicity of language which has preserved the 'Elegy.' It is a commonplace thing to say that the power of giving freshness to commonplace is amongst the highest proofs of poetical genius. One reason is, apparently, that it is so difficult to extract the pure and ennobling element from the coarser materials in which any obvious truth comes to be embedded. The difficulty of feeling rightly is as great as the difficulty of finding a worthy utterance of the feeling. Everybody may judge of the difficulty of Gray's task who will attend to what passes at a funeral. On such an occasion one is inclined to fancy, *a priori*, mourners will drop all affectation and speak poetically because they will speak from their hearts; but, as a matter of fact, there is no occasion on which there is generally such a lavish expenditure of painful and jarring sentiment, of vulgarity, affectation, and insincerity; and thus Gray's meditations stand out from other treatments of a similar theme not merely by the technical merits of the language, but by the admirable truth and purity of the underlying sentiment. The temptation to be too obtrusively moral and improving, to indulge in inappropriate epigram, in sham feeling, in idle sophistry, in strained and exaggerated gloominess, or even on occasion to heighten the effect by inappropriate humour, is so strong with most people that Gray's kindness and delicacy of feeling, qualities which were perceptible to the despised public, must be regarded as contributing quite as much to the success of the 'Elegy' as the technical merits of

form, which, moreover, can hardly be separated from the merits of substance.

Indeed, when we come to the other odes which have similar qualities of mere style, we are at no loss to explain the difference of reception. The beautiful 'Ode upon Eton,' for example, comes into conflict with one's commonsense. We know too well that an Eton boy is not always the happy and immaculate creature of Gray's fancy; and one feels that the reflections upon his probable degradation imply a fit of temporary ill-humour in the poet, supervening, no doubt, upon a deeper vein of melancholy. The sentiment is too splenetic to be pleasing.........

The learned and fastidious don shows through the inspired 'bard' by many equally unmistakable indications. His editor, Mitford, collected a number of parallel passages which curiously indicate the degree in which his mind was saturated with recollections of poetical literature. It seems to be now considered as unjustifiable plagiarism for a poet to assimilate the phrases of his predecessors. We may indeed, find abundant proofs of familiarity with Shakespeare in Shelley, and in more recent writers; but they are generally of the unconscious kind, and would otherwise be avoided as sins against originality. The poets of the last century, such as Goldsmith, and especially Pope, had no scruples in the matter. Their work did not profess to be a sudden and spontaneous inspiration. It was a slow elaboration, with which it was perfectly allowable to interweave any quantity of previously manufactured material so long as the juncture was not palpable. Gray's adaptations seem sometimes to make the whole tissue of his poetry. He owns to an unconscious appropriation from Green (author of the 'Spleen') of the main thoughts of his 'Ode to the Spring,' the comparison of men to ephemeral insects. But everywhere he is giving out phrases which he has previously assimilated. So in the very spirited translation from the Norse, 'Uprose the king of men with speed,' we have a verse from the 'Allegro'—'Right against the Eastern Gate'—cropping up naturally in quite a fresh connection. A single phrase seems to combine several semi-conscious recollections. The words in the 'Bard' 'dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart' come from Shakespeare, and the preceding 'dear as the light

that visits those sad eyes' are perhaps from Otway. But it is useless to accumulate instances of so palpable a process.

It is only in character that Gray should have clung to a peculiar dictum, as he would have insisted upon wearing his proper academical costume in a performance in the senate-house. He would no more have dropped into Wordsworth's vernacular than he would have smoked a pipe in one of Warton's pot-houses. Wordsworth considered this dignity to be unnatural pomposity; and undoubtedly the language is frequently conventional and 'unnatural,' and a stumbling-block of offence to the generation which gave up wigs. Equally annoying was Gray's immense delight in semi-allegorical figures. We have whole catalogues of abstract qualities scarcely personified. Ambition, bitter Scorn, grinning Infamy, Falsehood, hard Unkindness, keen Remorse, and moody Madness are all collected in one stanza not exceptional in style—beings which to us are almost as offensive as the muse whom he has pretty well ceased to invoke, though he still appeals to his lyre. This fashion reached its culminating point in the celebrated invocation, somewhere recorded by Coleridge, 'Inoculation, heavenly maid!' The personified qualities are a kind of fading 'survival'—ghosts of the old allegorical persons who put on a rather more solid clothing of flesh and blood with Spenser, and with Gray scarcely putting in a stronger claim to vitality than is implied in the use of capital letters. The 'muses' were nearly extinct, and in Pope's time the gods and goddesses had come to be regarded as so much 'machinery' invented by Homer to work his epic poetry. They were, in fact, passions and qualities in masquerade; and they therefore found it very easy, in the next generation, to drop even this thin disguise, and fit themselves for poëtic usage, not by taking the name of a pagan deity, but by a simple typographical device..............

The peculiar merit of Gray is that he had force enough, though only at the cost of slow and laborious travail, to find an utterance for genuine emotion, which was enriched instead of being made unnatural by his varied culture. The critic in him never injured the quality, but only reduced the quantity, of his work. What little he left is so perfect in its kind, so far above any contemporary performances, because he never forgot, like some learned people, that the ultimate aim of the poet should be to touch our hearts by showing his

own, and not to exhibit his learning, or his fine taste, or his skill in mimicking the notes of his predecessors. He could rarely cast aside his reserve, or forget his academical dignity enough to speak at all; but when he does speak he always shows that the genuine depth of feeling underlies the crust of propriety. He cannot drop, nor does he desire to drop, the conventionality of style, but he makes us feel that he is a human being before he is a critic or a don. He wears stately robes because it is an ingrained habit, but he does not suppose that the tailor can make the man.

[*From Chambers's " Cyclopædia of English Literature."*]

The *Ode to Eton College, the Ode to Adversity*, and the far-famed *Elegy*, present the same careful and elaborate finishing [as the *Progress of Poesy* and the *Bard*]; but the thoughts and imagery are more simple, natural, and touching. A train of moral feelings, and solemn or affecting associations, is presented to the mind, in connection with beautiful natural scenery and objects of real life. In a letter to Beattie, Gray remarks: "As to description, I have always thought that it made the most graceful ornament of poetry, but never ought to make the subject." He practised what he taught; for there is always some sentiment or reflection arising out of the poet's descriptive passages. These are generally grave, tender, or pathetic. The cast of his own mind, and the comparative loneliness of his situation and studies, nursed a sort of philosophic spleen, and led him to moralise on the vanity of life. Byron and others have attached inordinate value to the *Elegy*, as the main prop of Gray's reputation. A manuscript copy of the poem in Gray's hand-writing (a small neat hand; he always wrote with a crow-quill) was sold in 1854 for the large sum of £131! The *Elegy* is, doubtless, the most frequently read and repeated of all his productions, because it is connected with ordinary existence and genuine feeling, and describes, in exquisite harmonious verse, what all persons must, at some time or other, have felt or imagined. But the highest poetry can never be very extensively popular. A simple ballad air will convey pleasure to a greater number of persons than the most successful efforts of accomplished musical taste and genius; and, in like manner, poetry which deals with subjects of familiar life, must find more readers

than those inspired flights of imagination, or recondite allusions, however graced with the charms of poetry, which can only be enjoyed by persons of fine sensibility, and something of kindred taste and knowledge. Gray's classical diction, his historical and mythological personifications, must ever be lost on the multitude. Even Dr. Johnson was tempted into a coarse and unjust criticism of Gray, chiefly because the critic admired no poetry which did not contain some weighty moral truth, or some chain of reasoning. To restrict poetical excellence to this standard, would be to blot out Spenser from the list of high poets, and to curtail Shakespeare and Milton of more than half their glory. Let us recollect with another poet—the author of the *Night Thoughts*—that "a fixed star is as much in the bounds of nature as a flower of the field, though less obvious, and of far greater dignity." Or as Pope has versified the same sentiment:

> Though the same sun, with all-diffusive rays,
> Blush in the rose, and in the diamond blaze,
> We prize the stronger effort of his power,
> And justly set the gem above the flower.

[*From Shaw's "History of English Literature."*]

His industry was untiring, and his acquirements undoubtedly immense; for he had pushed his researches far beyond the usual limits of ancient classical philology, and was not only deeply versed in the romance literature of the Middle Ages, in modern French and Italian, but had studied the then almost unknown departments of Scandinavian and Celtic poetry. Constant traces may be found in all his works of the degree to which he had assimilated the spirit not only of the Greek lyric poetry, but the finest perfume of the great Italian writers: many passages of his works are a kind of mosaic of thought and imagery borrowed from Pindar, from the choral portions of the Attic tragedy, and from the majestic lyrics of the Italian poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; but though the substance of these mosaics may be borrowed from a multitude of sources, the fragments are, so to say, fused into one solid body by the intense flame of a powerful and fervent imagination. His finest lyric compositions are the Odes entitled *The Bard*, that on the *Progress of Poesy*, the *Installation Ode* on the Duke of Grafton's

election to the Chancellorship of the University, and the short but truly noble *Ode to Adversity*, which breathes the severe and lofty spirit of the highest Greek lyric inspiration. The *Elegy written in a Country Churchyard* is a masterpiece from beginning to end. The thoughts indeed are obvious enough, but the dignity with which they are expressed, the immense range of allusion and description with which they are illustrated, and the finished grace of the language and versification in which they are embodied, give to this work something of that inimitable perfection of design and execution which we see in an antique statue or a sculptured gem. In the *Bard*, starting from the picturesque idea of a Welsh poet and patriot contemplating the victorious invasion of his country by Edward I., he passes in prophetic review the whole panorama of English History, and gives a series of most animated events and personages from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century. It is true that he is occasionally turgid, but the general march of the poem has a rush and a glow worthy of Pindar himself. The phantoms of the great and the illustrious flit before us like the shadowy kings in the weird procession of Macbeth: and the unity of sentiment is maintained first by the gratified vengeance with which the prophet foresees the crimes and sufferings of the oppressors of his country and their descendants, and by the triumphant prediction of the glorious reign of the Tudor race in Britain. In the Odes entitled *The Fatal Sisters* and *The Descent of Odin*, Gray borrowed his materials from the Scandinavian legends. The tone of the Norse poetry is not perhaps very faithfully reproduced, but the fiery and gigantic imagery of the ancient Scalds was for the first time imitated in English; and though the chants retain some echoes of the sentiment and versification of more modern and polished literature, these attempts to revive the rude and archaic grandeur of the mythological traditions of the Eddas deserve no niggardly meed of approbation. In general Gray may be said to overcolour his language, and to indulge occasionally in an excess of ornament and personification; he will nevertheless be always regarded as a lyric poet of a very high order, and as one who brought an immense store of varied and picturesque erudition to feed the fire of a rich and powerful fancy.

[From John Morley's "Studies in Literature."]

It is to Gray that we must turn for the distinctive character of the best poetry of the eighteenth century. With reluctance we will surrender the Pindaric Odes, though not without risking the observation that some of Wordsworth's own criticism on Gray is as narrow and as much beside the mark as Jeffrey's on the *Excursion*. But the *Ode on Eton College* is not to have grudged to it the noble name and true quality of poetry, merely because, as one of Johnson's most unfortunate criticisms expresses it, the ode suggests nothing to Gray which every beholder does not equally think and feel. To find beautiful and pathetic language, set to harmonious numbers, for the common impressions of meditative minds, is no small part of the poet's task. That part has never been achieved by any poet in any tongue with more complete perfection and success than in the immortal *Elegy*, of which we may truly say that it has for nearly a century and a half given to greater multitudes of men more of the exquisite pleasure of poetry than any other single piece in all the glorious treasury of English verse. It abounds, as Johnson says, "with images which find a mirror in every mind, and with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo." These moving commonplaces of the human lot Gray approached through books and studious contemplation; not, as Wordsworth approached them, by daily contact with the lives and habit of men and the forces and magical apparitions of external nature. But it is a narrow view to suppose that the men of the eighteenth century did not look through the literary conventions of the day to the truths of life and nature behind them. The conventions have gone, or are changed, and we are all glad of it. Wordsworth effected a wholesome deliverance when he attacked the artificial diction, the personifications, the allegories, the antitheses, the barren rhymes and monotonous metres, which the reigning taste had approved. But while welcoming the new freshness, sincerity, and direct and fertile return on nature, that is a very bad reason why we should disparage poetry so genial, so simple, so humane, and so perpetually pleasing, as the best verse of the rationalistic century.

[*From Johnson's "Lives of the Poets."*]

In the character of his Elegy I rejoice to concur with the common reader; for by the common-sense of readers, uncorrupted with literary prejudices, after all the refinements of subtlety and the dogmatism of learning, must be finally decided all claim to poetical honours. The "Churchyard" abounds with images which find a mirror in every mind, and with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo. The four stanzas, beginning "Yet even these bones," are to me original: I have never seen the notions in any other place; yet he that reads them here persuades himself that he has always felt them. Had Gray written often thus, it had been vain to blame, and useless to praise him.

[*From Collier's "History of English Literature."*]

Gray is best known by his famous *Elegy written in a Country Churchyard*, whose solemn stanzas roll out their muffled music, like the subdued tolling of a great minster bell. Corrected and recorrected line by line, as were all this poet's works, it yet shows no sign of elaboration—its melancholy grace is the perfection of art. There are writers with whom a slovenly style stands for nature, and rude unpruned stanzas for the fairest growths of poetry. Gray was not of these. His classically formed taste was too pure and too fastidious to be content with anything but carefully polished verses: and we therefore have to thank him for giving us, in the "Elegy," as noble a specimen of grave and scholarly English as our literature affords. This poem was published in 1750.

[*From Angus's "Handbook of English Literature."*]

The characteristics of Gray's mind appear in his poems in all their glory. Like Milton, he had mastered all the classic poetry of antiquity, and much of the poetry of modern Italy; and, like Milton, he admired the creations of Gothic genius. The most cultivated classic of his age, he yet was among the first to welcome the Celtic strains of Macpherson's Ossian, and is known as one of the most skilful translators of the wild superstitions of the Norse nations; his *Fatal Sisters* and the

Descent of Odin faithfully represent the abruptness and energy of the ancient bards. Add to these qualities fire and life, boldness of imagination, condensed and brilliant expression, deep and quick sympathy, and we have the secret of his success. His *Elegy*, which Johnson criticised too severely, and which Byron has warmly praised, has received the seal of universal acceptance, while his *Pindaric Odes* are, as compositions, unsurpassed for majesty and sweetness. If the meaning of his lines is occasionally latent, it is never indefinite or confused: repeated perusal may be necessary, but it is always rewarded, and as we read, beauties multiply and brighten to the view. His ear was exquisitely fine, and his versification has a harmony and variety found in few of our writers.

[*By Various Writers.*]

He always aims at the highest things, and if he does fail it is only by a hair's breadth.—*Hazlitt.*

Sir, I don't think Gray a first-rate poet. He has not a bold imagination, nor much command of words. The obscurity in which he has involved himself will not persuade us that he is sublime.—*Johnson.*

Humour was his natural and original turn.—*Horace Walpole.*

Perhaps he was the most learned man in Europe. He was equally acquainted with the elegant and profound parts of science, and that not superficially but thoroughly. He knew every branch of history, both natural and civil, had read all the original historians of England, France, and Italy, and was a great antiquarian. Criticism, metaphysics, morals, politics, made a principal part of his study. Voyages and travels of all sorts were his favourite amusements; and he had a fine taste in painting, prints, architecture, and gardening.—*Rev. Mr. Temple to Boswell.*

Had Gray written nothing but his "Elegy," high as he stands, I am not sure that he would not stand higher; without it his Odes would be insufficient for his fame.—*Byron.*

We cannot without some regret behold those talents, so capable of giving pleasure to all, exerted in efforts that can at best amuse only the few; we cannot behold the rising poet seeking fame among the learned without hinting to him the

same advice that Isocrates used to give his scholars: *study the people.*—*Goldsmith*, in the *Monthly Review.*

How enchantingly beautiful was Gray's Muse when she wandered through the churchyard in her morning dress! But when she was arrayed in gorgeous attire, in a monstrous hoop and a brocade petticoat, I could gaze upon her indeed; she made an impression on my eye, but not on my heart.—*Langhorne to H. More.*

He was the most finished artist, whose productions to the eye of the critic, and more especially to the artist, afforded a new kind of pleasure not incompatible with a distinct perception of the art employed.—*Sir J. Mackintosh.*

I have been reading Gray's works, and think him the only poet since Shakespeare entitled to the character of sublime. Perhaps you will remember that I once had a different opinion of him. I was prejudiced. He did not belong to our Thursday Society, and was an Eton man, which lowered him prodigiously in our esteem. I once thought Swift's "Letters" the best that could be written; but I like Gray's better. His humour or his wit, or whatever it is to be called, is never ill-natured or offensive, and yet I think equally poignant with the Dean's.—*William Cowper.*

I had always a passion for Gray, which his "Letters" are calculated to increase. His poetry is so exquisite that the delight I felt in reading him is generally mixed with regret that he wrote so little.........In my poor opinion his "Letters" possess all the graces and all the ease which I apprehend ought to distinguish this familiar species of composition. They have also another and a higher excellence: the temper and spirit he almost constantly discovers in the unguarded confidence and security of friendship, will rank him among the most amiable of men, as his charming verses will give him a place among the first of lyric poets.—*Hannah More.*

The Progress of Poesy.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES.

"The Progress of Poesy" was published along with the *Bard* in 1757. It is a Pindaric ode, that is, one written in imitation of the Epinikia, or Triumphal Odes, of Pindar, the Greek lyric poet (see note on l. 115). "It is a poem of three stanzas, in an elaborately consistent verse form, with forty-one lines in each stanza. The length of these periods is relieved by the regular division of each stanza into strophe, antistrophe, and epode, the same plan having been used by no previous English poet but Congreve, who had written in 1705 a learned and graceful *Discourse on the Pindarique Ode*, which Gray was possibly acquainted with. Congreve's practice, however, had been as unsatisfactory as his theory was excellent, and Gray was properly the first poet to comprehend and follow the mode of Pindar.

Mr. Mathew Arnold has pointed out that the evolution of *The Progress of Poesy* is no less nóble and sound than its style. It is worthy of remark that the power of evolution has not been common among lyrical poets even of a high rank. Even in Milton it is strangely absent, and we feel that all his odes, beautiful as they are, do not bud and branch and fall in fruit, closing with the exhaustion of their functions, but merely cease, because all poems must stop somewhere. The *Nativity Ode* does not close because the poet has nothing more to say, but merely because "'tis time our tedious song should here have an ending." In Collins, surely we find the same failing; the poem is a burst of emotion, but not an organism. The much-lauded *Ode to Liberty*, with its opening peal of trumpet-music, ends with a foolish abruptness, as if the poet had got tired of his instrument, and had thrown it away...... Gray, however, is the main example in our literature of a poet possessing this

Greek quality of structure in his lyrical work, and it is to be noted that throughout his career it never left him, even on occasions when he was deserted by every other form of inspiration. His poems whatever they are, are never chains of consecutive stanzas; each line, each group of lines, has its proper place in a structure that could not be shorter or longer without a radical re-arrangement of ideas.

The strophe of the opening stanza of *The Progress of Poesy* invokes that lyre of Æolian strings, the breathing of those Æolian flutes, which Pindar had made the symbol of the art of poetry, and the sources, progress, and various motions of that art, "enriching every subject with a pomp of diction and luxuriant harmony of numbers," are described under the image of a thousand descending streams. The antistrophe returns to the consideration of the power of poetry, not now in motion, but an alluring and a soothing force around which the Passions throng and are subdued, a thought being here borrowed apparently from Collins; the epode continues and combines these two strains of thought, and shows that poetry, whether in motion or at rest, is working the good-will of Love, who deigns herself to move in a rhythmic harmony, and be the slave of verse. In the second stanza, the strophe recalls the miserable state of man, relieved by the amenities of the heavenly Muse, who arms Hyperion against the sickly company of Night; the antistrophe shows us how the need of song arose in savage man, illuminated "their feather-cinctured chiefs, and dusky loves;" while the epode breaks into an ecstatic celebration of the advent of poetic art to Greece:—

> Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
> Isles, that crown th' Ægean deep,
> ....
> Murmured deep a solemn sound.—(ll. 67—73).

But the Muses "in Greece's evil hour," went to Rome, and "when Latium had her lofty spirit lost," it was to Albion that they turned their steps. The third strophe describes how the awful mother unveiled her face to Shakespeare; the antistrophe celebrates the advent of Milton and Dryden, while the final epode winds the whole poem to a close with a regret that the lyre once

held by the last-named poet has degenerated into hands like Gray's:—

> Hark! his hands the lyre explore!
> Bright-eyed Fancy, hovering o'er,
> ....
> Beneath the good how far,—but far above the Great.
> (ll. 107—123).—*Gosse.*

Gray has himself given the following analysis of the Ode in a series of footnotes to it forming a running commentary on it.

1—13. "The various sources of poetry, which give life and lustre to all its touches are described; its quiet majestic progress enriching every subject (otherwise dry and barren) with a pomp of diction and luxurious harmony of numbers; and its more rapid and irresistible course when swollen and hurried away by the conflict of tumultuous passions."

13—24. "The power of harmony to calm the turbulent sallies of the soul."

25—41. "Power of harmony to produce all the graces of motion in the body."

42—53. "To compensate the real and imaginary ills of life the Muse was given to mankind by the same Providence that sent the day to dispel by its presence the gloom and terrors of the night.'

43—65. "The influence of poetic genius over the remotest and most uncivilized nations; its connection with liberty, and the virtues naturally attending it."

66—82. "Progress of Poetry from Greece to Italy, and from Italy to England. Chaucer was not unacquainted with the writings of Dante or of Petrarch. The Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt had travelled in Italy, and formed their taste there. Spenser imitated the Italian writers, and Milton improved upon them. But this school expired soon after the Restoration, and a new one arose on the French model, which has subsisted ever since."

83—94. "Shakespeare."

95—106. "Milton and Dryden."

107—123. "The poet, though he cannot rival the eagle flight of Pindar, aspires to follow in the steps of Dryden—*Proximus huic magno sed proximus intervallo.*"

I. 1.

1. *Æolian lyre,* lyre of Pindar, who himself styled his lyrics. *Æolian,* from Æolis, a Greek colony in Asia Minor. The student should not confound this with the *Æolian harp,* s musical instrument consisting of a box on or within which are stretched strings on which the wind acts so as to produce musical sounds, and so named from *Æolus,* god of the winds.

Lyre—used by metonymy for "*lyric poetry.*" Gray quotes, in illustration of the first line, Psalm XVII, 9, (Common Prayer Book Version): "Awake up, my glory; awake, lute and harp," but omits *up* in quoting.

2. *Give to rapture,* let rapture, or inspiration, take possession of; cause inspired strains to issue from. *Trembling,* vibrating.

3. *Helicon,* a celebrated range of mountains in Bœotia, sacred to Apollo and the Muses, whence sprang the celebrated fountains of the Muses, *Aganippe* and *Hippocrene. Harmonious,* because sacred to the harmonious tuneful Muses, the inspiring goddesses of song.

4. *Mazy progress take,* begin their meandering course.

5. *Laughing,* gay or brilliant. *Round them,* in the district through which they flow. *Blow,* are in bloom.

6. *Drink,* imbibe or suck up from them. *Life,* freshness.

7—10. *Now......now,* at one time... at another time. *Stream of music,* harmonious spring (l. 3); spring of the tuneful muses.

9. *Verdant vales,* green valleys. *Ceres' golden reign,* fields of ripe corn. *Ceres,* in classic mythology, the goddess of corn and of harvests. She was the daughter of Saturn and Vesta, and had a daughter by Jupiter, whom she called Proserpine. This daughter was carried away by Pluto, as she was gathering flowers in the plains near Enna. Ceres went in search of her daughter, and during her absence, Attica became the most desolate country in the world, when she instructed Triptolemus of Eleusis in everything which concerned agriculture. Her benefits to mankind made

Ceres respected; and Sicily was supposed to be the favourite retreat of the goddess. *Reign*, realm.

10. *Amain*, with great force or violence—an adverb.

12. *Nodding*, swaying to and fro in the breeze. *Rebellow to*, loudly echo. *To*, in response to.

I. 2.

13. *Sovereign of*, one exercising absolute control over. *The willing soul*, the soul which resigns itself to thy pleasing influence.

14. *Solemn-breathing*, breathing solemnity; inspiring a feeling of solemnity. The epithet is from Milton: "A soft and solemn-breathing sound" (*Comus*, 555).

15. *Shell*, lyre: see Collin's *Ode on the Passions*, l. 3, and note.

16. *Thy soft control*, thy music which exercises a gentle and soothing influence on those who hear it.

17. *Thracia*, Thrace, where the God of War was said to have his home. *The Lord of War*, Ares, the Greek god of war. He is the personification of bold force and strength and not so much the god of war as of its tumult, confusion, and horrors. The principal seats of his worship were in Thrace and Scythia. He was identified by the Romans with their god Mars.

18. *Curbed the fury*, checked the impetuous speed *Car*, chariot of war.

19. *Dropt his thirsty lance at thy command.* Mr. Gosse thinks there is a special allusion here to Orpheus (see note on *Ode on the Passions*. l. 107), who is supposed to have lived in Thrace after the Argonautic expedition, and occupied himself with attempting to civilize his wild and warlike countrymen. *Thirsty*, thirsting for blood, eager to shed blood.

20. *Perching*—refers to "feathered king." *Sceptred hand*, hand bearing a sceptre (as king of the gods). See note on "*feathered king*" below.

21. *Lulls*, soothes. *The feathered king*, the king of birds: the eagle. The eagle was sacred to Jupiter, who was usually represented with an eagle standing with expanded wings at his feet, but in

his statue at Olympia, with the eagle perched on the top of the sceptre which he held in his hand. The phrase "feathered king" for the eagle occurs in the *Passionate Pilgrim*, XX.

22. *Ruffled plumes*, plumes disordered on account of the excitement caused by the music. *Flagging*, drooping.

23-4. *Quenched*, buried or sunk. *The terror of his beak*, his terrible beak. *Lightnings*, fiery glances.

I. 3.

25. *Thee the voice, the dance, obey*—referring to singing and dancing in accompaniment to music.

26. *Tempered to*, modulated to; regulated by.

27. *Idalia*—used for *Idalium*, in Cyprus, which was a seat of the worship of Venus, who was called Idalia from that circumstance. *Velvet-green*, meadows covered with the green grass as soft as velvet.

28. *Rosy-crowned*, crowned or adorned with chaplets of roses. *Loves*, Cupids. Venus was represented as attended by Cupids and the Graces.

29. *Cytherea's day*, the *Aphrodisia*, or festival of Venus, who was called Cytherea, from Cythera, an island off the coast of Laconia, where she is said to have landed when she arose from the foam of the sea, and which was a chief seat of her worship. *Cytherea*, Venus, or Aphrodite was the goddess of beauty, the mother of love, the queen of laughter, and the mistress of the graces and the pleasures. She arose from the foam of the sea near the island of Cyprus, or, according to Hesiod, of Cythera, whither she was wafted by the zephyrs, and received on the sea-shore by the Seasons, daughters of Jupiter and Themis. She was soon after carried to heaven, where all the gods admired her beauty, and all the goddesses became jealous of her personal charms. She is commonly represented as the wife of Hephæstus (Vulcan); but she was faithless to her husband and was in love with Ares, the god of war, and a number of other gods. She surpassed all the other goddesses in beauty, and hence received the golden apple from Paris.

30. *Antic*, literally, ancient or old; hence old-fashioned, quaint, or fantastic. The word seems to mean "sportive" or "playful," here. An antic meant a merry-andrew or buffoon.

31. *Light*, lightly; with light, elastic, or springy step. *Frolic*, frolicsome. Cf. Milton's *L'Allegro*, 1. 18: "the frolic wind that breathes the spring." *Measures*, steps regulated by music.

32. *Circling*, forming circles or rings.

33. *Brisk*, lively. *In cadence beating*, their steps making modulated or measured sounds.

35. *Many a twinkling*, glancing with a number of flashes in rapid succession. *Twinkling*—refers to the dazzling fairness and beauty of their feet. Cf. Tennyson's *Princess*, III, 338—41:

"Many a little hand
Glanced like a touch of sunshine on the rocks,
Many a light foot shone like a jewel set
In the dark crag."

36. *Their Queen*, Venus, the goddess of love, whose attendants the Graces were.

37. *The Graces*, the *Gratiæ*, or *Charites*, personifications of grace and beauty, usually described as the daughters of Zeus, and as three in number, namely, Aglaia, Thalia and Euphrosyne. They were the goddesses who enhanced the enjoyments of life by refinement and gentleness. They were the friends of the Muses, with whom they lived in Olympus. They are generally represented as three beautiful maidens in the bloom of life, in the attitude of embracing one another.

38-9. *Sublime*, uplifted—a Latinism. *In gliding state*, gliding in a stately manner; with easy and dignified movements. *Wins her easy way*, moves on with ease and grace.

40-41. *Rising*, swelling or heaving. *Purple light of love*: blushes of love. The phrase is adapted from Phrynicus, "The light of love gleams upon her purple cheek."

II. 1.

46. *Fond*, foolish—the primary meaning of the word. The "fond complaint" is that life is full of ills without any counterbalancing good. The poet is pointing out how poetry, for one thing can compensate for the ills of life.

47. *Justify the laws of Jove*—borrowed from Milton's *Paradise Lost*., 26: "And justify the ways of God to men."

50. *Birds of boding cry*, birds whose cry forebodes evil; birds of ill omen, such as owls.

51. *Gives*, permits—a Latinism. *Night, dews, &c.*—are governed by *gives*.

52-3. *Down the eastern hills......spy*—borrowed from Cowley's "*Brutus: an Ode*:"

> "One would have thought 't had heard the Morning crow,
> Or seen her well-appointed Star,
> Come marching up the eastern hills afar."

Hyperion, the sun. Hyperion was a Titan in Greek mythology, the son of Uranus and Ge, father of Helios, Selene, and Eos, often identified with Apollo, and represented as a model of manly beauty. Hence "Hyperion to a satyr," in *Hamlet*, I, ii. *Hyperion* should properly be accented on the third syllable. But Gray follows Shakespeare's accentuation of the word in the passage just referred to. *Glittering shafts of war*, gleaming spears of men arrayed for battle. The bright rays of the sun are meant.

II. 2.

54. *Beyond the solar road*, in regions too far to be reached by the rays of the sun; that is, in the north polar regions.

55. *Shaggy forms*, people clad in the rough skins of animals (with the hair on) like the Greenlanders, for example. *Ice-built mountains*, mountains formed of ice; icebergs.

56. *The Muse has......gloom*, poetry and song have penetrated into and dissipated the twilight gloom (or without the metaphor), enlivened the dark cheerless nights.

58. *Laid*, placed—refers to *youth*.

60. *Repeat*, celebrate—governing *chiefs* and *loves*.

61. *Loose numbers*, irregular verses, that is, verses not constructed according to the rules of metre.

62. *Feather-cinctured*, having cinctures or waistbands of feathers. The phrase "feathered cincture" occurs in *Paradise Lost*, IX, 1117. *Dusky*, tawny; dark-skinned. *Loves*, sweethearts.

63-4. *Track*—governed by pursue. *Her track pursue*, follow in her wake. *Generous Shame*, noble sensibility to what present dishonour; high sense of honour,

65. *The unconquerable Mind*, independence of thought which nothing can subdue.

II. 3.

66. *Delphi's steep*, the steep hill on which Delphi stands Mount Parnassus. *Delphi*, the ancient town of Castri (now renamed Delphi), is situated on a lofty eminence on the south side of Mount Parnassus, and was famous for a temple of Apollo, the god of song, and for an oracle celebrated in every age and country.

67. *Crown*, form a crown on ; deck the surface.

68. *Ilissus*, a small river of Attica, flowing through Athens and falling into the sea near the Piræus. There was a temple on its banks sacred to the Muses.

69. *Mæander*, a celebrated river of Asia Minor, rising near Celænæ, and flowing through Caria and Ionia into the Ægean Sea between Miletus and Priene, after it has been increased by the waters of the Marsyas, Lycus, Eudon, Lethæus, &c. It is celebrated among the poets for its windings, which amount to no less than 600. This river has given us the verb "to mæander." *Amber*, of a pale yellow colour like amber. The Mæander is a turbid or muddy river.

71. *Your tuneful echoes*, the sounds you used to give forth in reverberation of the Muse's song.

72. *Mute, but to the voice of anguish*, echoing no other sounds than those of suffering uttered by the people. Gray refers to the oppressed and degraded condition of Greece under Turkish rule.

73. *Poetic mountain*, mountain which breathed poetic inspiration.

77. *The sad Nine*, the Muses, who were nine in number : see note on the title of "*The Lawyer's Farewell to his Muse.*" *In Greece's evil hour*, in the unfortunate period of her downful. There were no poets in Greece after the third century B. C. Greece became a Roman province in the second century B. C.

78. *Their Parnassus*, their favourite abode, Parnassus. *Parnassus*, the highest range a few miles north of Delphi. Its two highest summits were called Tithorea, and Lycorea ; and hence Parnassus

is frequently described by the poets as *double-headed.* Immediately above Delphi the mountain forms a semicircular range of lofty rocks, at the foot of which the town was built. It contained numerous caves, glens and romantic ravines, and is celebrated as one of the chief seats of Apollo and the Muses, and an inspiring source of poetry and song. *The Latian plains*, the plains of Latium, a province of Italy near the Tiber, which rose into consequence with the foundation of Rome in it, and afterwards became a Roman territory. Here *Latium* is put for Italy. In his own note on ll. 66—83 given in the Introductory Notes, Gray seems to include Dante and Petrarch among the poets of Latium.

79. *The pomp of tyrant Power*, the luxury of despotic Rome.

80. *Coward Vice.........chains*, the immorality of the enslaved Greeks, who seem to have gloried in their degradation instead of being ashamed of it. Gray speaks elsewhere of "Servitude that hugs her chain." Vice is called *cowardly*," because people, however wicked, are generally afraid to admit that they are so.

81. *Albion*, Britain—so named from the ancient inhabitants called Albionës. The usual etymology of *albus* (white), said to have been given by Julius Cæsar in allusion to the "white cliffs," is quite untenable, as Aristotle mentions the islands of Albion and Ierne (Ireland) four hundred years before the invasion of Cæsar.

III. 1.

83. *Far from the sun*, that is, far from the sunny land of Italy which the Muses had left. *Summer gale*, summer gales of the Mediterranean.

84. *Nature's Darling*, the beloved son of Nature. Shakespeare is called *Nature's* child, because his poetry owes its excellence to his natural genius, not to book-learning. Milton calls him "Fancy's child," and speaks of his "wood-notes wild" (*L'Allegro*, 133-4).

85. *What time*, at the time when—a Latin construction. *Lucid Avon.* Shakespeare was born at Stratford-on-Avon.

86. *The mighty Mother*, Nature. Dryden uses the phrase in his translation of the Æneid. *Unveil*, uncover; show.

87-8. *Awful*, awe-inspiring. *Stretched forth .....smiled.* Mitford quotes an almost identical line from Sandys' translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* :

"The child
Stretched forth his little arms, and on him smiled."

89. *Pencil*, painting brush; hence, power of graphic description.

90. *Richly*, in rich colours. *The vernal year*, the spring—synecdoche.

91. *Unlock the gates of joy*, give delight or pleasure.

92. *Of horror that*, that can unlock the gates of horror.

III. 2.

95-6. *Nor second he*, nor was he second, or inferior, to Shakespeare. *Rode sublime......Ecstasy*—borrowed from *Paradise Lost*, VI, 771 : "He on the wings of cherub rode sublime." *Sublime*, aloft *Ecstasy*, transport, or rapture (see l. 2); inspiration.

97. *The abyss*, the limitless realm of Heaven. The allusion is to *Paradise Lost*, VII, 12—14:

"Up led by thee
Into the Heaven of Heavens I have presumed,
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air."

99. *The living throne, the sapphire blaze.* The reference is to Ezekiel's Vision, which he thus describes. "And I looked, and behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire. Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. and this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. And every one and four faces, and every one had four wings. And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a supphir stone : and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it And I saw as the colour of Amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upwards, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so

was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.'—*Ezekiel I.*

102. *Closed his eyes in endless night,* become totally blind. *Milton.* John Milton (1608—1674), the great poet, was born in 1608, at Bread Street, London, and was the son of a scrivener. After graduating at Cambridge, he returned to his father's house at Horton, unwilling to join the Church or the Bar, for either of which he was intended. At Horton he wrote his *Comus*, *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, and *Lycidas*, poems of such merit as by themselves to have immortalized his name. In 1637 he travelled in France and in Italy, where he became acquainted with Galileo, then a prisoner of the Inquisition. He returned to England in 1639, and settled down as tutor to his nephews. On the outbreak of the Civil war he was engaged as a political writer on the popular side. He was a determined republican and wrote with energy against monarchial government, while as Latin Secretary to the Council of State he rendered good servicc to the cause of national liberty. He wrote with great asperity a reply to the famous *Eikon Basilike*, and attacked a royalist writer named Salmasius (Saumaise) with such intensity and vigour as to cause his death. In 1643 he married Mary Powell, who left him in a month. Milton wanted to repudiate her, but a reconciliation was effected. It was at this period that he wrote his *Doctrine of Divorce.* His wife dying in 1652, he married again, but his second wife also died soon, and he married a third time. During the plague he retired to Buckinghamshire where he completed his immortal work, "Paradise Lost," which was sold to a bookseller for £ 5 ! and which was first printed in 1667. He subsequently wrote "Paradise Regained," and "Samson Agonistes," a sacred drama. In 1654 he lost his sight, which had been impaired by hard study, and which had been gradually failing. There are pathetic allusions to his blindness in Milton's poetry. Among the prose works of Milton are his "History of Britain," "Areopagitica," "Eikonoclastes," and "Reason of Church Government." In the *Areopagitica* he pleaded the cause of a free press with great force.

Dryden, John Dryden (1631—1700), an English poet. His first dramatic effort was a failure; but he soon produced *The Rival Ladies*,

and next *The Indian Emperor*, which made him famous. In 1670 he was made poet-laureate. His *Absalom and Achitopel*, a political satire published 1681–2, achieved great success. On the accession of James II, he turned Roman Catholic and wrote *The Hind and the Panther*, an allegorical poem in defence of his new religion. In 1695 appeared his translation of *Virgil*—a performance sufficient in itself to immortalize his name. His Pindaric ode *Alexander's Feast* is a well-known piece. Among his other works are *Annus Mirabilis*, *MacFlecknoe*, a satire on Shadwell, who was made poet-laureate in his place; *Song of St. Cecilia*, a choral ode; *Essay on Dramatic Poets* (Prose); *Essay on Heroic Plays* (also Prose). His prose is matchless for its freedom, vigour, variety and copiousness; and his poetry is correct, harmonious, and strong, particularly his Satires.

103. *Less presumptuous*, not ambitious of ascending to such sublime heights; not aiming at such sublime things.

105. *Coursers*, horses. Here is an allusion to Pegasus, the winged horse which typified poetic inspiration. *Two coursers*—because a car is often drawn by two horses. We may suppose that the two coursers represent the two prominent qualities, say, Variety and Sonorousness, of Dryden's poetry. *Ethereal*, belonging to the upper regions above the atmosphere; celestial.

106. *Long-resounding pace*—borrowed from Pope (*Epistles*, I, ii, 267):

> "Waller was smooth; but Dryden taught to join,
> The varying verse, the full-resounding line,
> The long majestic march, and energy "divine."

Necks in thunder clothed—is from the Bible: "Hast thou given the horse strength? Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?"

III. 3.

107. *His hands the lyre explore.* Dryden wrote several Odes, of which the two St. Cecilia Odes, and that to the Memory of Miss Anne Killigrew may be specially named.

109. *Pictured*, having pictures on it. The metaphor is taken from a female scattering flowers from an urn or vase.

112. *What daring Spirit.* The poet is referring to himself.

114. *Pride,* dignity or majesty. *Ample pinion,* comprehensive genius.

115. *The Theban Eagle,* Pindar, the greatest lyric poet of Greece, born at Thebes B. C. 520, died about B. C. 456. He excelled in every kind of poetical composition which he attempted, but his principal compositions now extant consist of hymns or odes in honour of the victors at the Grecian games. Of his numerous poems only 45 Odes have been preserved. They are arranged under four heads—the Olympian, Pythian, Isthmean, and Nemean—and are written in the Æolic dialect. Boldness, enthusiasm, brilliancy of style and richness of imagery, are the predominant qualities of Pindar's compositions. Pindar compares himself to the eagle in one of his odes. *Eagle*—governed by *bear.* *Bear,* sustain in his poetic flights.

118. *Would run,* used to run or float.

119. *Glitter in the Muse's ray,* are seen by poets.

120. *Orient,* bright. Milton has "orient pearl," and "orient colours." *Unborrowed of,* not obtained from.

121. *Keep his distant way.* Gray refers to his retiring disposition.

123. *The Great,* that is, the great as the world understands it.

The Bard.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES.

"The Bard" was published, as we have seen, with "The Progress of Poesy" in 1757. It is founded on a tradition, current in Wales, that Edward I., when he completed the conquest of that country, ordered all the bards that fell into his hands to be put to death. The plan of the poem is as follows:—A bard, who is the speaker, after lamenting the fate of his comrades, prophesies that of Edward II., and the conquest of Edward III.; his death, and that of the Black Prince; of Richard II., with the wars of York and Lancaster; the murder of Henry VI., and of Edward V., and his brother. He then turns to the glory and prosperity following the accession of the Tudors, through Elizabeth's reign, and concludes with a vision of the poetry of Shakespeare and Milton.

It may be added that the tradition on which the *Bard* is founded is absolutely without foundation.

Gray's original plan of the poem was somewhat different, as appears from the following sketch of it in his common-place book.

"The army of Edward I., as they march through a deep valley, are suddenly stopped by the appearance of a venerable figure seated on the summit of an inaccessible rock, who, with a voice more than human, reproaches the King with all the misery and desolation which he had brought on his country; foretells the misfortunes of the Norman race, and with prophetic spirit, declares that all his cruelty shall never extinguish the noble ardour of poetic genius in this island; and that men shall never be wanting to celebrate true virtue and valour in immortal strains, to expose vice and infamous pleasure, and boldly censure tyranny and oppression. His song ended, he precipitates himself from the mountain, and is swallowed up by the river that rolls at its foot."

"In these three poems [the *Bard*, the *Progress of Poesy*, and the *Liberty of Genius*, the last planned, but never written], the dignity of genius and its function as a ruler and benefactor of mankind, are made the chief subject of discourse, and a mission is claimed for artists in verse than which none was ever conceived more brilliant or more august. But fortunately for his readers Gray was diverted from his purely abstract consideration of history into a concrete observation of its most picturesque forms, and forgot to trace the "noble ardour of poetic genius" in painting vivid pictures of Edward II., enduring his torture in Berkeley Castle, and of the massacre of the bards at the battle of Camlan. Some of the scenes which pass across the magic mirror of the old man's imagination are unrivalled for concision and force. That in which the court of Elizabeth, surrounded by her lords and her poets, flashes upon the inner eye, is of an inimitable felicity :—

Girt with many a baron bold,
Sublime their starry fronts they rear;

. . . .

Bright Rapture calls, and soaring as she sings,
Waves in the eye of heaven, her many-coloured wings.

(ll. 111—124.)

This closing vision of a pretty but incongruous "Rapture" may remind us that the crowning fault of Gray and his school, their assumption that a mythology might be formed out of the emotions of the human mind, and a new Olympus be fitted out with brand-new gods of a moralist's making, is rarely prominent in *The Bard* or the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, his two greatest works. Some use of allegorical abstraction is necessary to the very structure of poetry, and is to be found in the works of our most realistic writers. It is in its excess that it becomes ridiculous or tedious, as in Mason and other imitators of Gray. The master himself was not by any means able at all times to clothe his abstractions with flesh and blood, but he is never ridiculous. He felt, indeed, the danger of the tendency in himself and others, and he made some remarks on the subject to Mason which were wholly salutary :—'I had rather some of these personages, *Resignation*, *Peace*, *Revenge*. *Slaughter*, *Ambition*, were stripped of their allegorical garb. A little simplicity here and there in the expression would better prepare the high and fantastic strain, and all the imaginable harpings that follow.........The true lyric style, with all its flights of fancy, ornaments, and heightening of expression, and harmony of sound, is in its nature superior to every other style; which is just the cause why it could not be borne in a work of great length, no more than the eye could bear to see all this scene that we constantly gaze upon,—the verdure of the fields and woods, the azure of the sea and skies, turned into one dazzling expanse of gems. The epic, therefore, assumed a style of graver colours, and only struck on a diamond (borrowed from her sister) here and there, where it best became her. When we pass from the diction that suits this kind of writing to that which belongs to the former, it appears natural and delights us: but to pass on a sudden from the lyric glare to the epic solemnity (if I may be allowed to talk nonsense) has a very different effect. We seem to drop from verse into mere prose, from light into darkness.'

Between Dryden and Wordsworth there was no man but Gray who could write in prose about his art with such coherence and the science as this. These careless sentences outweigh tomes of Blair's glittering rhetoric and Hurd's stilted disquisitions on the Beautiful and the Elevated."—*Gosse.*

I. 1.

Seize, imperative (optative) mood of the third person. *Ruthless*, merciless. The "ruthless king" is Edward I.: see l. 10. Note the striking alliteration throughout the ode, and especially in the opening lines.

2. *Confusion*, defeat. *Wait on*, attend.

3. *Conquest*—is personified as a female (as the Greeks personified Victory) fanning Edward's banner with her wings. The reference is to his conquest of Wales, which however, says the Bard, will be ineffectual to save him from the stings of his own conscience and the curses of the Welsh. *Crimson*, red with the blood of the slain.

4. *Mock the air with idle state*— borrowed from *King John*, V, i 73: "Mocking the air with colours idly spread." *Idle*, vain; useless,

5. *Helm nor*, neither helm nor. *Helm*—poetical contraction of *helmet*. *Hauberk*, properly armour for the neck; here, as Gray explains in a note, "a texture of steel ringlets, or rings interwoven, forming a coat of mail that sat close to the body, and adapted itself to every motion."

7. *Thy secret soul*, thy inmost soul; the conscience.

8. *Cambria*, the Latin name of Wales, the land of the *Cymri*, the Keltic tribe to which the Welsh belonged.

9–10. *The crested pride of Edward*, the gaily dressed and crested Edward. *Crested*, having a crest or plume of feathers on the helmet. Edward is spoken of as marching out of Wales after its conquest, in all the pomp of a triumphal procession. *The first Edward* (Edward I.), King of England (1239—1307), surnamed Longshanks, who succeeded his father, Henry III., in 1272. At the time of his father's death he was in Palestine; when he returned, he conquered Wales. To preserve Wales, he caused his son, who was born in Carnarvon, to be called the "Prince of Wales," which ever since has continued to be the title of the eldest son of the king of England. In endeavouring to break the spirit of the Scotch, he was unsuccessful; the patriotism of Wallace and his followers completely baffling his attempts at the entire subjugation of that people.

11. *Snowdon*—"was the name given by the Saxons to that mountainous tract which the Welsh themselves call *Craigian-Eryri*. It included all the highlands of Caernarvonshire and Merionethshire, as far east as the river Conway" (*Gray*). *Shaggy*, covered with trees and shrubs growing thickly.

12. *Wound*, caused to wind or go in a long curving line. *Long array*, of soldiers.

12. *Stout*, brave. *Gloster*, Gilbert de Clare, surnamed the Red, Earl of Gloucester and Hertford; married at Westminster, May 2, 1290, to Jean d'Acre (so called from having been born at Acre in the Holy Land), second daughter of King Edward I. He died in 1295. *In speechless trance*, mute with astonishment and horror.

14. *Mortimer* Edmund de Mortimer, Lord of Wigmore. Gilbert de Clare and Edmund de Mortimer, were both Lords Marchers, whose lands lay on the borders of Wales, and probably accompanied the king in this expedition (*Gray*). *Couched*, placed in the rest, or in the position for charging an enemy.

I. 2.

16. *Frowns*, projects in a threatening manner (as if it would fall upon and crush any one who went under it). *Old*—an epithet often applied to mountains and rivers.

19. *Loose*, loosely—adverb to *streamed*.

20. *Streamed like......wind*—borrowed from *Paradise Lost*, I, 536: "Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind." *To*, under the action of; being blown about by. Gray says in a note that the image in ll. 19-20 "was taken from a well-known picture of Raphael, representing the Supreme Being in the vision of Ezekiel, which may be seen at Florence-*"

21. *A master's hand*, with the touch of a skilled musician. *Fire*, inspired ardour. The Celtic bards were poets as well as musicians: they sang their own songs to the accompainment of the harp or lyre played by themselves.

22. *Struck the deep......lyre*, struck the chords of his lyre, and made them give forth deep notes of woe.

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* In the Gallery of the Pitti Palace.

23-4. *Desert*, solitary; empty. *Sighs to the......beneath*, makes a low wailing sound in accompaniment to the awful sound of the torrent rushing below. *Beneath*—used as an adjective to *voice*.

26. *Hoarser*, continually increasing in hoarseness—a Latinism. Or the meaning may be "hoarser than usual."

27. *Vocal to Hoel's harp*, sounding in accompaniment to Hoel's harp; responsive or echoing to Hoel's harp—adjectival to *giant-oak* and *cave*, or to *arms*.

28. *Hoel*—was the son of Owen Gwynedd, Prince of North Wales, by an Irish girl. He was one of his father's generals in his wars against the English. His poems are still extant. *Llewellyn*, a Welsh prince and poet at the time of the conquest of Wales. *Soft*—Some commentators take "soft Llewellyn's lay" as meaning "lay celebrating soft or mild Llewellyn;" and others, "the soft or tender lay by Llewellyn." *Llewellyn's lay*—lay celebrating, or composed by, Llewellyn.

I. 3.

29—31. *Cold*—in death (and silent). *Cadwallo*, *Urien*—Welsh bards of whom nothing is known, and none of whose poems are extant. *Hushed*, stilled.

32. *Mordred*. This name is not to be found in the lists of the old Welsh bards. Gray has probably taken it from the Arthurian romances, in which a nephew of Arthur's is named *Mordred*.

34. *Plinlimmon*, a mountain of Wales on the borders of Glamorganshire. *Cloud-topped*, with clouds resting on its summit. Shakespeare has "cloud-capt." The hyperbole in these lines was probably suggested by the story of Orpheus: see note on l. 107 of the *Ode on the Passions*.

35. *Arvon*, "shores of Caernarvonshire opposite to the isle of Anglesey"—(*Gray*). *They*, the massacred bards.

37. *Affrighted*, frightened away by the ghastly appearance of the corpses, on which they would otherwise have had their feast.

38. *The famished eagle screams and passes by*, the eagle, though famished, flies away without touching them, being frightened by their ghastly appearance.

41. *Dear as the ruddy......heart*—borrowed from *Julius Cæsar*, II, i, 289–90.

> "As dear to me as are the ruddy drops
> That visit my sad heart."

44. *Band*—in apposition with *them* in l. 47.

46. *Avengers*—in apposition with *they* in l. 47.

48. *Weave with bloody.........line.* Gray refers to his Ode "The Fatal Sisters," which we give below:—

> "Now the storm begins to lower,
> (Haste, the loom of Hell prepare),
> Iron sleet of arrowy shower
> Hurtles in the darkened air
>
> Glitt'ring lances are the loom,
> Where the dusky warp we strain,
> Weaving many a soldier's doom,
> Orkney's woe and Randver's bane.
>
> See the grisly texture grow!
> ('Tis of human entrails made),
> And the weights, that play below,
> Each a gasping warrior's head.
>
> Shafts for shuttles, dipped in gore,
> Shoot the trembling cords along.
> Sword that once a monarch bore,
> Keeps the tissue close and strong.
>
> Mista, black terrific maid,
> Sangrida, and Hilda, see,
> Join the wayward work to aid:
> 'Tis the woof of victory.
>
> Ere the ruddy sun be set
> Pikes must shiver, javelins sing,
> Blade with clattering buckler meet,
> Hauberk crash, and helmet ring.
>
> (Weave the crimson web of war)
> Let us go and let us fly,
> Where our friends the conflict share,
> Where they triumph, where they die.

As the paths of Fate we tread,
Wading through the ensanguined field,
Gondula and Geira, spread
O'er the youthful king your shield.

We the reins to slaughter give,
Ours to kill and ours to spare,
Spite of danger he shall live
(Weave the crimson web of war).

They, whom once the desert beach
Pent within its bleak domain,
Soon their ample sway shall stretch
O'er the plenty of the plain.

Low the dauntless earl is laid,
Gored with many a gaping wound;
Fate demands a nobler head;
Soon a king shall bite the ground.

Long his loss shall Eirin weep
Ne'er again his likeness see;
Long her strains in sorrow steep,
Strains of immortality!

Horror covers all the heath,
Clouds of carnage blot the sun,
Sisters, weave the web of death,
Sisters, cease; the work is done.

Hail the task, and hail the hands!
Songs of joy and triumph sing!
Joy to the victorious bands;
Triumph to the younger king.

Mortal, thou that hear'st the tale,
Learn the tenor of our song.
Scotland, through each winding vale
Far and wide the notes prolong.

Sisters, hence with spurs of speed:
Each her thundering falchion wield;
Each bestride her sable steed,
Hurry, hurry to the field!

49. From this line to the end of l. 100, the Bard and his spectral companions are singing the fate of Edward's line together. At the end of their song, the latter disappear, and the Bard finishes his prophecy alone. There should be *single* quotations at the beginning of this line, and the end of l. 100, as there were in the original editions. *Warp........woof*. The *warp* consists of the long parallel threads, and the *woof* of the cross threads. *Weave the warp and weave the woof*—would mean to weave each separately, but that is impossible, for there can be no weaving or web without both. The words seem to be used as a more emphatic way of saying "interweave the warp and woof together into a web."

51. *Verge enough*, sufficient breadth of border.

52. *The characters of hell to trace*, to represent the terrible fate of Edward's line by means of hellish marks or figures, such marks or figures as the devils would use for such a purpose. *Characters*, what is stamped or impressed; hence, mark or figure.

54. *Severn*. Berkeley Castle is in the town of Berkeley in Gloucestershire. It is situated on the small river Avon, a mile and a half from where it joins the estuary of the Severn. *With affright*, as if frightened by the shrieks it echoes; in affrighted tones. The shrieks being frightful, their echoes would be of the same character.

55. *Berkeley* (not *Berkley* as Gray spells it). See note on the preceding line. *That*—refers to "*shrieks of death*." Some editors read "The shrieks of death, through Berkeley's roofs that ring." This would make *that* refer to *roofs*, and *ring* mean "ring or resound with the shrieks."

56. *Agonizing*, enduring agony. The *agonizing King* is Edward II., son of Edward I. (1284—1327). After his accession to the throne, he suffered himself to be governed by his favourites Gaveston and Despensers, which occasioned the barons to rise against him. In his reign the battle of Bannockburn was fought. In 1327 he was deposed by his subjects, and his crown conferred on his son, when he was confined in Berkeley Castle, Gloucestershire. Isabella and Mortimer wished that he should die, but also that his death should be so wrought as to cause no public scandal. He was purposely placed in the charge of harsh and brutal men, who inflicted on him

every privation and indignity that seemed most likely to shorten his life, or to crush his intellect. But still the wretched man lived on; vainly asking for an interview with his wife, and imploring to be allowed to see the faces of his children. His enemies' eagerness for his death at last overpowered their caution. Two ruffians, named Gournay and Ogle, had charge of the King in Berkeley Castle. They murdered him on the night of the 21st of September, 1327. In order that no external mark of violence might appear on his person, they introduced a tube into his body, through which a red hot iron was thrust up into his bowels. The dreadful shrieks of the poor victim awoke some of the inmates of the Castle, who could judge too well who it was that was perishing; and they prayed for Edward's departing soul, though they dared not attempt to save him. In the morning the body was exhibited. There was no outward wound; but the horrible contortions of the features were enough to disprove the lie told by his tormentors and their employers, that Edward of Carnarvon had died a natural death.

57. *She-wolf of France*—a phrase applied to Margaret of Anjou in 3 *Henry VI.*, I, iv, 111, and here used for Isabella, daughter of Philip the Fair, King of France (1290—1357), who was married in 1308 to Edward, Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward II. She was a woman of licentious manners, and, after various adventures was imprisoned by her son Edward III., in the Castle of Rising, where she died after a confinement of 28 years.

59. *Who*, he who. *Thy country*, France. The allusion is to Edward III.'s invasion of France: see note on l. 62.

60. *Scourge of heaven*, one sent by God to execute his vengeance. *Scourge*—in opposition with *he* understood as the antecedent of *who*.

62. *Solitude*, that is, desolation or devastation.

II. 2.

63. *Mighty Victor*, Edward III. (1327—1377). He concluded peace with Scotland in 1328; but invaded that country again in 1333, and having defeated the Scots at Halidon Hill, placed Edward Balliol on the throne. In 1337 he claimed the French throne, in right of his mother, and made several attempts to enforce his claim. In 1346, he invaded France, won the battle of Cressy (near

Abbeville), with the assistance of the Black Prince, his son, and took Calais. In 1356, the Black Prince led a second expedition against France, and won the battle of Poitiers, taking prisoner the French King John, who was brought to England, and ultimately died at the Savoy, in London (1364). In 1376, the Black Prince died, followed in 1377 by his father.

65-6. *No pitying eye............obsequies.* The allusion is to the death of Edward III., "abandoned by his children, and even robbed in his last moments by his courtiers and his mistress" (*Gray*).

67. *The sable warrior*, Edward the Black Prince, son of Edward III., and Philippa of Hainault, was born 1330. He was one of the most gallant warriors of his day, and took a very prominent part in his father's French campaigns. He won his spurs at the battle of Crecy (1346), was victorious at Poitiers, and after the treaty of peace in 1348 governed the newly acquired Duchy of Acquitance. He lost his health in the campaigns he undertook for the restoration of Peter the Cruel to the throne of Castille. His vassals, oppressed by imposts, revolted; his captains were defeated, and the afflicted hero fled to England, where he died in 1376, about a year before his father.

69. *The swarm that in............born?* What is become of the crowd of parasites that owed their position to thee and gathered round thee in the height of thy greatness and power? We add the words, "Where are they?" at the end of the line to show the force of the note of interrogation. The parasites are compared to butterflies or other insects.

70. *To salute the rising Morn*, to pay court to the new King (Richard II). *Morn*—used by metonymy for *Sun*. We have a proverb: "More worship the rising than the setting sun," *i.e.*, more pay honour to those coming into power than to those going out of it. The metaphor is from the worship of the sun by the ancient Persians (a worship still paid to it by their descendants the Parsees). *Richard II.*, King of England, son of the celebrated Black Prince, was born in 1366, and ascended the throne in 1377, at 11 years of age. His minority was stormy, and when he reigned by himself he proved weak, indolent, and wasteful. The revolt of Wat Tyler (1382), the progress and the supres-

sion of Wickliffism, are the principal events of his reign. Having gone into Ireland in order to put down an insurrection, he thus left the field free to his cousin, the Duke of Hereford, son of the Duke of Lancaster, who got himself crowned under the name of Henry IV (1399). Richard soon perished in prison, murdered, it is said, by the order of his cousin.

71. *Fair laughs the Morn*, in the morning or commencement of his (Richard's) reign, he is surrounded by pomp and splendour. *Soft the Zephyrs blow*, the flattery of courtiers is very pleasing to him. The Zephyr is the west wind, which in Europe is mild and pleasant, as it blows over the vast expanse of the Atlantic, the waters of which are warmed by the Gulf Stream.

72. *The azure realm*, the ocean (of life).

73. *In gallant trim*, gaily decked; in all her beauty and grandeur. *The vessel*, that is, the King with his courtiers. Gray tells us in a note that he refers in these lines to the magnificence of Richard II.'s reign.

74. *Youth on the prow...........helm*, with Youth to point the way and Pleasure to steer the vessel. The simple meaning is that Richard pursued a life of pleasure with all the ardour of his youthful disposition.

75-6. *Regardless of the...........prey*, without any thought of the fearful calamities which silently await him at the close of his life. *Sway*, force.

II. 3.

79. *Reft*, deprived. The allusion is to the deposition of Richard II.

80—82. *Close by the regal........guest.* Gray accepts the story that Richard was starved to death, and not assassinated by Sir Piers Exton. *The regal chair*, not the throne, but the chair on which he is sitting at the banquet. Thirst and hunger are represented as cruelly mocking him, while he sits at a banquet he cannot partake of. *Fell*, cruel. *Famine*, starvation; hunger. *Baleful*, foreboding evil or misery. *Smile*—cognate object of *scowl*. *Baffled guest*, Richard before whom they have placed a banquet, of which he cannot partake. *Baffled*, disappointed.

83. *Heard ye the din, &c.* This and the following lines refer to the Wars of the Roses, which extended over a period of over 30 years (1455—1485). *Bray*, make a loud harsh noise like the braying of an ass--an appropriate word to use of a trumpet or similar brass instrument, or for clashing arms and armour, but rather a peculiar one to use of a *noise*. Milton speaks of "armour clashing on armour braying horrible discord."

84. *Lance to..........horse.* The first *lance* and the first *horse* are nominatives absolute.

85. *Havoc*, devastation; wasting with fire and sword. *Urge*, press on—a Latin use of the word.

86. *Kindred squadrons*, opposed armies of people belonging to the same race. *Mow their way*—a methapor from mowing grass.

87. *Towers of Julius*, the Tower of London, the ancient and famous citadel of that city, memorable for the number of distinguished persons, as well as prisoners of state, who have been confined within its walls. The Tower was inhabited as a palace by several English sovereigns, until the reign of Elizabeth. Since her death it has been chiefly used as a state-prison and repository for arms, records, and property belonging to the crown. The regalia or crown jewels of England are deposited in it. *The tradition that Julius Cæsar founded a citadel here (about 54 B. C.) rests on no authority.* There is no evidence of any fortress having existed there before the Conquest. *Julius*, Julius Cæsar.

88. *With many a foul......fed.* Among those murdered in the Tower, Gray mentions Henry VI., George, Duke of Clarence, Edward V, and his brother Richard, Duke of York. Note the forcible metaphor in this line.

89. *His consort*, Margaret of Anjou (1429—1482), queen of the "meek usurper," Henry VI. She was the daughter of Rene, titular King of Sicily, Naples, and Jerusalem, but in fact a dependant of the King of France. Henry VI married her in 1445. To obtain her hand, most of the remaining English possessions in France were given up, and Margaret thus became unpopular with the English, from her first coming among them. She was a woman of beauty and undaunted spirit; thus she gained an ascendancy over her weak husband, which was often unwisely and sometimes

cruelly exercised, and was the immediate cause of his downfall. She, however, fully shared his' sufferings, and made the most vigorous attempts to retrieve his fortunes, enduring exile, innumerable perils by land and by sea, and a long imprisonment; she at length closed her chequered life in her native country, and died in poverty. *His father*, Henry V (1388—1422), who was the eldest son of Henry IV, and was educated at Oxford, under the guidance of his half uncle, Cardinal Henry Beaufort. On commencing his reign in 1413, he displayed many noble traits, although in his youth he had been very irregular; but, on coming to the crown, he discarded his evil companions, and conducted himself with a dignity becoming his station. Having formed the project of conquering France, he left his kingdom in the hands of a regency, and invaded that country, where he displayed uncommon courage. With 15,000 men he gained the battle of Agincourt, though the French amounted to 52,000. He then returned to England; but, three years afterwards, went again to France, where he married Katherine, the daughter of the French king. He was a brave and energetic monarch, and the most popular ruler that had till then sat upon the throne of England, not a single instance of insurrection or discontent being manifested throughout his reign.

60. *The meek usurper*, Henry VI.

91. *Above, below*, above and below the loom, as the threads of the warp move up and down to admit the woof to pass between them and form figures. *The rose of snow*, the white rose of York. *Rose*—governed by *spread*.

92. *Twined with her blushing foe*, intertwined with the red rose of Lancaster. The reference is to the union of the two houses by the marriage of Henry VII. of Lancaster with Elizabeth of York.

93. *The bristled boar*, the boar having bristles; Richard, Duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard III., whose badge was a silver boar. Richard III. was the brother of Edward IV. and was created Duke of Gloucester. On the defeat and death of his father, the Duke of York, Richard, and his brother George, afterwards Duke of Clarence, were sent to Utrecht, where they remained for a short time under the protection of the Duke of Burgundy. At the age of 19 he returned to England, and assisted his brother

Edward against the Earl of Warwick. At the battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury he displayed great courage and ability. It is stated that, after the latter battle, he murdered Prince Edward, son of Henry VI., and certainly he married his widow, lady Anne Neville, daughter of the Earl of Warwick. He caused his nephews, Edward V. and Richard, Duke of York, to be secretly murdered in the Tower; after which he was himself proclaimed king in 1483, and was for some time a popular monarch. The Duke of Buckingham, who had assisted him in his usurpation, subsequently conspired against him, but was taken prisoner and beheaded. Henry, Earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry VII., of the house of Lancaster, was abroad, but returned privately and landed at Milford, in Wales, where he was joined by a few followers, who soon increased. He then marched against Richard III., whom he encountered at Bosworth Field, where the king was slain. The nuns of Leicester begged his body of the victors, and buried it in their chappel. *Infant-gore*, the blood of his young nephews, Edward and Richard.

94. *Wallows*—a word suggested by the designation, boar, used, for Richard in the previous line. *The thorny shade*, the shade of the rose of York. The allusion is to the thorns of a rose-tree.

95. *Accursed*—because the characters of hell are being traced on the tissue which is being woven in it.

III. 1.

97—99. *To sudden fate......consecrate*, we consecrate half of thy heart to sudden fate; your wife shall die suddenly. "Eleanor of Castile died (1290) a few years after the Conquest of Wales. The heroic proof she gave of her affection for her lord is well known. The monuments of his regret and sorrow for the loss of her, are still to be seen at Northampton, Gaddington, Waltham, and other places."—*Gray.*

101. *Stay, oh stay:* This is addressed by the Bard to his spectral brethren. The tissue of Edward's line is finished and they are disappearing: see note on l. 49.

103–4. *Fire*, light up; illuminate. *Melt*, dissolve.

106. *Their glittering skirts unroll*, unroll their glittering skirts; disclose their bright edges. What he now sees in his vision is what is to happen long afterwards, and so it is called the "skirts" or edges of the scene lying open to his prophetic view.

107. *Spare my sight*, do not dazzle my eyes with your splendour.

108. *Unborn ages*, ages yet to come. *Crowd not on my soul*, do not rush all at once into my mind.

109. *Our long-lost Arthur*, Arthur, King of Britain in the sixth century, famous in the romances of the "Round Table." The life of this personage is so much mixed with fables, that even his existence is problematical. According to the traditions he was the son of Uther, Pendragon, or chief, of the Britons; succeeded that prince (about 516 A. D.) with the aid of the enchanter Merlin, who gave him a magic sword, conquered the Saxons, Picts, and Scotch, subjected Iceland; signalized himself by a thousand exploits won on the continent; married the beautiful Guinevere, his relation; established Christianity in his states; instituted the order of chivalry known by the name of "The Round Table," and died on the field of battle in 542, after a glorious reign.

"It was the common belief of the Welsh nation, that King Arthur was still alive in Fairyland, and would return again to reign over Britain. Iscanus, in his poem "De Bello Frojano," lib. iii, 466, says that the Lesbians do not believe in the death of Castor and Pollux, though they sought them in vain among the Trojans and on the ocean. They sacrifice to them as gods and expect their return, *as the Britons wait* for the arrival of Arthur."—*Gray*.

110. *Genuine kings, Britannia's issue*, kings who are truly descended from the ancient kings of Britain. The allusion is to the descent of the Tudor dynasty (and through them, of the succeeding dynasties of England) from Owen Tudor, father of Henry VII, who was a Welshman, and therefore a Briton. "Both Merlin and Taliessin had prophesied that the Welsh should regain their sovereignty over this island, which seemed to be accomplished in the House of Tudor."—*Gray*.

III. 2.

111. *Girt with*, surrounded by. What follows is a description of Elizabeth and her court.

112. *Sublime*, high. See *Progress of Poesy*, l. 38, and note. *Starry fronts*, bright foreheads. *They*—the "genuine kings" of l. 110. *Rear*, raise or lift up.

115. *A form divine*, namely Queen Elizabeth (1538—1603), daughter of Henry VII., by Anne Boleyn. She was educated in the Protestant religion, and in the reign of her sister Mary, was sent to the Tower, and the warrant for her execution was actually prepared, but the fear of the popular commotion her death would cause, saved her life, and she was afterwards removed to Woodstock, where she was kept till 1555, and then taken to the royal palace of Hotfield. On the death of her sister 1558, she was proclaimed queen. The first measures of her reign were to send succours to the reforming party in Scotland, and to give her assistance to the French Hugenots. Dudley, Earl of Leicester, became her favourite, and had the ambition to aspire to her hand, and no doubt would have gained it, had not the influence of Burleigh and the other ministers been more powerful than the Queen's own inclinations. In 1568 Mary Queen of Scots fled to England, but being a Catholic, and having offended Elizabeth, she was taken prisoner, and after being kept many years in confinement,was at last beheaded in Fotheringay Castle. The French and Spaniards having formed a league for the extirpation of heresy, Elizabeth was induced to protect the Protestants, and her assistance was of great effect in bringing about the separation of the United Provinces from the dominion of Philip II., who in 1588 sent against England his famous Armada, to which the Pope gave the appellation of Invincible. The English fleet, assisted by the winds, prevented the Spaniards from landing, and the boasted Armada was destroyed. The Duke of Medina, who commanded the Spanish fleet, escaped with no more than 60 sail out of his whole fleet, and these were very much shattered. In this same year, Leicester, her favourite, died, and Robert Devereux, Earl of Sussex took his place; but this nobleman, on account of his treason, was executed in 1601. After this event, Elizabeth seems to have become weary of the world, for she never recovered the shock which the signing of the death-warrant of Essex gave her. The last weeks of her life were passed in a state of great mental prostration.

116. *Proclaims her of the Briton-line*, shows that she is descended from the ancient British kings.

117. *Lion port*, gait as majestic as that of a lion. "Speed, relating an audience given by Queen Elizabeth to Paul Dyialinske, Ambassador of Poland, says, 'And thus she, lion-like rising, daunted the malapert orator, no less with her stately port and majestical deporture, than with the tartnesse of her princelie cheekes.'"—*Gray*.

118. *Attempered to*, harmonizing with. Cf. *Progress of Poesy*, l. 26. *Virgin grace*. Elizabeth never married, and is spoken of as the "Virgin Queen," or "Maiden Queen."

119. *Strings symphonious*, strings sounding in concert, or so as to produce a symphony. *Tremble*, vibrate.

120. *Vocal transport*, rapturous vocal music, or song.

121. *Talessin*, chief of the British bards in the sixth century. His memory is held in high veneration by the Welsh.

122. *A soul to animate thy clay*, such soul-stirring melody as might wake thee from the grave. Cf. *Comus*, 560:

"I was all ear,
And took in strains that might create a soul.
Under the ribs of death."

124. *Eye of heaven*—a familiar poetical metaphor for the sun.

III. 3.

125. *Adorn*—imperative of the third person, governing *War*, *Love*, and *Truth* : "let the verse again adorn."

126-7. *Truth severe ......drest.* The allusion in these lines is to Spenser's *Faerie Queen*, in the first stanza of which we have the line.,

"Fierce warres and faithful loves shall moralize my song."

128. *Buskined*, tragic : see note on *Ode on the Passions*, l. 72.

129-30. These lines allude to Shakespeare. Cf. *Progress of Poesy*, ll. 89—94.

131-2. *A voice*, namely, that of Milton. *As of the cherub choir*, as that of the choir of angels. The allusion in these lines is to the subject of the *Paradise Lost.*

133. *Lessen on my ear*, are heard more and more faintly (coming, as they do from the remote future.)

134. *Fond impious man.* The Bard is again addressing Edward I. *Fond*, foolish. *Yon sanguine cloud*, yon clould red with the blood of the bards thou hast slain.

135. *Repairs his golden flood*, shines again in all his glory. Cf. *Lycidas*, 167-8 :

> "So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed
> And yet anon repairs his drooping head."

Repairs, renews. *Golden flood*, stream of golden rays.

140. *Our fates*, thy fate and mine.

142. *Triumph and to die*, to die triumphantly (because I know I shall live again in the *British* poets who follow me). The Bard alludes to the poets of the Elizabethan age.

Life of William Collins.

William Collins.—None of our poets has lived more under the "skiey influences" of imagination than that exquisite but ill-fated bard, Collins. His works are imbued with a fine ethereal fancy and purity of taste; and though, like the poems of Gray, they are small in number and quantity they are rich in vivid imagery and beautiful description.

His history is brief but painful. William Collins was the son of a respectable tradesman, a hatter, at Chichester, where he was born on Christmas-day, 1721. In his *Ode to Pity*, the poet alludes to his "native plains," which are bounded by the South Down hills, and to the small river Arun, one of the streams of Sussex, near which Otway also was born:

> But wherefore need I wander wide
> To old Ilissus' distant side?
> Deserted stream and mute!
> Wild Arun, too, has heard thy strains,
> And Echo 'midst my native plains
> Been soothed by Pity's lute.

Collins received a learned education, first as a scholar on the foundation of Winchester College (January 1733), and afterwards as a Demy of Magdalen College, Oxford, at which he took his degree of B. A. in November 1743. He quitted the college abruptly, and afterwards visited his maternal uncle, Colonel Martyn, at that time with his regiment in Flanders. On his return to England, Collins intended entering the church, but he soon abandoned this design, and applied himself to literature. While at college he published his *Persian Eclogues*, afterwards republished with the title of *Oriental Eclogues*, and next year (1743) his *Epistle to Sir Thomas Hanmer on his Edition of Shakepeare.* Collins, as

Johnson remarks, "had many projects in his head." He planned several tragedies, and issued *Proposals for a History of the Revival of Learning*, a work which he never accomplished. He was full of high hopes and magnificent schemes. His learning was extensive, but he wanted steadiness of purpose and application. In 1746, he published his *Odes* which were purchased by Millar the bookseller, but failed to attract attention. Collins sunk under the disappointment, and became still more indolent and dissipated. The fine promise of his youth, his ardour and ambition, melted away under this baneful and depressing influence. Once again, however, he strung his lyre with poetical enthusiasm. Thomson died in 1748 : Collins —who resided some time at Richmond—knew and loved him, and his latest and best editor, Mr. W. Moy Thomas, conjectures that Thomson has sketched his friend in one of the stanzas of the *Castle of Indolence* :

> Of all the gentle tenants of the place,
> There was a man of special grave remark ;
> A certain tender gloom o'erspread his face,
> Pensive, not sad, in thought involved, not dark......
> Ten thousand glorious systems would he build,
> Ten thousand great ideas filled his mind ;
> But with the colouds they fled, and left no trace behind.

When Thomson died, Collins quitted Richmond, and he honoured the memory of his brother poet with an ode, which is certainly one of the finest elegiac productions in the language. Among his friends was also Home, the author of *Douglas*, to whom he addressed an ode, which was found unfinished after his death, on the *Superstitions of the Highlands*. He loved to dwell on these dim and visionary objects, and the compliment he pays to Tasso may be applied equally to himself :

> Prevailing poet, whose undoubting mind
> Believed the magic wonders which he sung.

At this period Collins seems to have contemplated a journey to Scotland

The time shall come when I perhaps may tread
Your lowly glens, o'erhung with spreading broom;
Or o'er your stretching heaths by Fancy led;
Or o'er your mountains creep in awful gloom!
Then will I dress once more the faded bower,
Where Johnson sat in Drummond's classic shade;
Or crop from Teviotdale each lyric flower,
And mourn on Yarrow's banks where Willy's laid.

In the midst of the poet's difficulties and distresses in 1749 his uncle died, and left him about £ 2,000; "a sum," says Johnson, "which Collins could scarcely think exhaustible, and which he did not live to exhaust." He sank into a state of nervous imbecility. All hope and exertion had fled. Johnson met him one day, carrying with him as he travelled an English Testament. "I have but one book," said Collins, "but it is the best." In his latter days he was tended by his sister in Chichester. He used, when at liberty, to wander day and night among the aisles and cloisters of Chichester Cathedral, accompanying the music with loud sobs and moans. After five years passed in this melancholy condition, death at length came to his relief, and in 1759—in the thirty-ninth year of his age—his troubled and melancholy career was terminated: it affords one of the most touching examples of accomplished youth and genius, linked to personal calamity, that throws its lights and shades on our literary annals.

Critical Observations on the Odes of Collins.

Southey has remarked, that though utterly neglected on their first appearance, the *Odes* of Collins, in the course of one generation, without any adventitious aid to bring them into notice, were acknowledged to be the best of their kind in the language. "Silently and imperceptibly they had risen by their own buoyancy, and their power was felt by every reader who had any true poetic feeling." This popularity seems still to be on the increase, though the want of human interest and of action in Collins' poetry prevents its being generally read.

The *Eclogues* are free from the occasional obscurity and remoteness of conception that in part pervade the *Odes*, and they charm by their figurative language and descriptions, the simplicity and beauty of their dialogues and sentiments, and their musical versification. The desert scene in *Hassan*, the *Camel driver*, is a finished picture—impressive, and even appalling, in its reality. *The Ode on the Passions*, and that to *Evening*, are the finest of his lyrical works. The former is a magnificent gallery of allegorical paintings; and the poetical diction is equally rich with the conception. No poet has made more use of metaphors and personification. He has individualised even metaphysical pursuits, which he terms "the shadowy tribes of Mind." Pity is presented with "eyes of dewy light"—a felicitous epithet; and Danger is described with the boldness and distinctness of sculpture:

> Danger, whose limbs of giant mould
> What mortal eye can fixed behold?
> Who stalks his round, a hideous form,
> Howling amidst the midnight storm,
> Or throws him on the ridgy steep
> Of some loose hanging rock to sleep.

The real genius of Collins must be looked for in his *Odes*. Judged by these latter, though they are but few in number, he will be found entitled to a very high place: for true warmth of colouring, power of personification, and dreamy sweetness of harmony, no English poet had till then appeared that could be compared to Collins. His most commonly quoted lyric is the ode entitled *The Passions*, in which Fear, Rage, Pity, Joy, Hope, Melancholy, and other abstract qualities are successively introduced trying their skill on different musical instruments. Their respective choice of these, and the manner in which each Passion acquits itself, is very ingeniously conceived. Nevertheless, many of the less popular odes, as that addressed to *Fear*, to *Pity*, to *Simplicity*, and that *On the Poetical Character*, contain happy strokes, sometimes expressed in wonderfully laconic language, and singularly vivid portraiture.

Collins possessed to an unusual degree the power of giving life and personality to an abstract conception, and that this power is exceedingly rare may be seen by the predominant coldness and pedantry which generally prevail in modern lyric poetry, where personification has been abused till it has become a mere mechanical artifice. In Collins the prosopopœia is always fresh and vivid. In the unfinished *Ode on the Superstitions of the Highlands* there are many fine touches of fancy and description; but the reader cannot divest himself of a consciousness that the pictures are rather transcripts from books than vivid reflection from personal knowledge. Collins writes of the Highlands and their inhabitants not like a native but like an English hunter after the picturesque. Some of the smaller and less ambitious lyrics, as the *Verses to the Memory of Thomson*, the *Dirge in Cymbeline*, and the exquisite verses *How Sleep the Brave*, are perhaps destined to a more certain immortality; for a tender, luxuriant richness of reverie perhaps there is nothing in the English language that surpasses them. All the qualities of Collins's finest thought and expression will be found united in the lovely little *Ode to Evening*, consisting of but a few stanzas in blank verse, but so subtly harmonised that they may be read a thousand times without observing the absence of rhyme, and exhibiting such a sweet, soothing, and yet picturesque series of images, all appropriate to the subject, that the sights and sounds of evening seem to be reproduced with a magical fidelity: the whole poem seems drooping with dew and breathing the fragrance of the hour. It resembles a melody of Schubert.—*Chambers—Shaw.*

Mr. Collins was a man of extensive literature and of vigorous faculties. He was acquainted not only with the learned tongues, but with the Italian, French, and Spanish languages. He had employed his mind chiefly on works of fiction and subjects of fancy; and, by indulging in some peculiar habits of thought, was eminently delighted with those flights of imagination which pass the bounds of nature, and to which the mind is reconciled only by a passive

acquiescence in popular traditions. He loved fairies, genii, giants, and monsters; but he delighted to rove through the meanders of enchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, to repose by the waterfalls of Elysian gardens.—*Johnson.*

I have lately finished eight volumes of Johnson's *Prefaces, or Lives of the Poets.* In all that number I observe but one man—a poet of no great fame—of whom I did not know that he existed till I found him there, whose mind seems to have had the slightest tincture of religion: and he was hardly in his senses. His name was Collins. He sunk into a state of melancholy and died young. Not long before his death he was found at his lodgings in Islington by his biographer, with the New Testament in his hand. He said to Johnson, "I have but one book, but it is the best." Of him, therefore, there are some hopes. But from the lives of all the rest there is but one inference to be drawn: that poets are a very worthless, wicked set of people.—*Cowper.*

At Chichester tradition has preserved some striking and affecting occurrences of the last days of the happy Collins. He would haunt the aisles and cloisters of the Cathedral, roving nights and days together, loving their "dim religious light;" and when the choristers chanted their anthem, the listening and bewildered poet, carried out of himself by the solemn strains and his own too susceptible imagination, moaned and shrieked, and awoke a sadness and terror most affecting in so solemn a place.—*I. D. Israeli.*

Gray's odes are fine, and though somewhat too formal, perhaps, the *Welsh Bard* is full of Greek fire. Some of Mason's choruses are sonorous, and swing along not unmajestically; and Tom Warton caught no small portion of the true lyrical spirit—witness his Kilkerran Castle song. But Collins far surpassed them all, and his odes are all exquisitely beautiful, except his *Ode to Freedom,* and it is sublime—*John Wilson.*

The Passions.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

The "Ode on the Passions" was published in 1746, and is the most commonly quoted of his lyrics. In it different Passions—Fear, Anger, Despair, &c.,—are successively introduced as trying their hand on different musical instruments, their respective choice of each of these, and the manner in which each Passion acquits itself being very ingeniously conceived. His painting of the various Passions themselves is admirable: the figures stand out as boldly before you as if they were sketched by a master-mind on canvas. Nothing more beautiful than Fear was ever imagined: his recoiling back

"Even at the sound himself had made,"

is an image worthy of being placed side by side with Shakespeare's "Patience on a Monument." Both Anger and Despair are also exqusitely struck off in a few appropriate lines. In the description of Hope, beautifully as it is executed, the word "still" occurs three times within the space of five lines, and palls a little on the ear; it is, however, a magnificent ode, and one amongst the many choice gems which are stored in the rich cabinet of English poetry. Saving in a few instances, Collins was very careful in the words he selected to express his thoughts. Sometimes the lines are a little too much disfigured with alliteration; but this is a fault which Spenser also abounds in: still, it is very often the means of giving a more melodious finish to the rhythm. Occasionally, too, though very rarely, there is an obscurity in his meaning. We are compelled to look back, to pick up the connecting-link of the thought, before we can properly comprehend its sense; so it is in some of the most splendid passages in Shelley, which are buri d beneath a pile of poetical imagery."

Hales makes the following remarks on this Ode: "Collins, like Spenser, has but little dramatic power; for his fine imaginative abstractions were themselves real and substantial enough; he does not feel any necessity for clothing them with flesh and blood Hence in his poems, as in Spenser's, abstractions abound unbodied,

as Peace, Evening Mercy, Simplicity, and the Passions in the following poem. He introduces "airy nothings" in all their airiness; for him they are the real existences. Despair is as forcible a figure in his eyes as the desperate man; the concrete has no advantage over the abstract. Poets of this type are never, and are not likely ever to be, so popular as the dramatic poets. The general taste prefers creations more tangible and solid; it cannot be satisfied with spiritual visions; it wearies of pure airinesses; nor can this preference be justly censured. Collins can only hope like another greater master of the same poetic order, for "fit audience, though few."

1. *Heavenly maid.* In l. 95 he expresses the same idea by "sphere-descended maid."

2. *Early Greece,* Greece in the early part of her history; primitive Greece.

3. *Shell,* lyre—so called because Hermes, the inventor of the instrument, is said to have formed the first one out of a tortoise-shell, by stretching gut-strings over it. The Romans called it for this reason *testudo,* literally a tortoise-shell.

4. *Her magic cell,* the enchanted grotto in which she lived. In l. 107, we are told that this was in Athens, a city that the Greeks would naturally consider as the birth-place and nursery of an art, to the knowledge of which they attached so much importance as being intimately allied with the very elements of social order. We may perhaps locate this cell at the base, or on the slopes, of the *Nymphæum,* or Hill of the Nymphs, in Athens.

5. *Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting*—according to the nature of the passion appealed to by the music. *Exulting*—with joy; *trembling*—with fear; *raging*—with anger; *fainting*—with despair.

6. *Possessed,* brought under the irresistible influence of each passion. The word is used, in this sense, of evil spirits, passions, &c. *Beyond the Muse's painting,* to such a pitch that the Muse is unable to describe it.

7. *Glowing mind,* mind excited by passion to the degree of ardour.

8. *Disturbed,* agitated or excited. *Raised,* elevated. *Refined,* purified.

9. *Once*, on one occasion. *Fired*, inflamed with passion.

10. *Rapt*, thrown into an ecstasy of passion.

11. *The supporting myrtles*, the myrtle-trees on which she had hung them. The myrtle, like the ivy and the laurel, was sacred to the rewards of poets. Hence Milton (*Lycidas*, 1—3) speaks of writing poetry as plucking the berries of these plants and shattering their leaves. Poetry being Music's sister (l. 108), she is described as hanging her instruments on myrtles.

12. *Snatched*, caught up suddenly. *Instruments of sound*, musical instruments.

13. *Apart*, separately; each lesson by itself. The idea is that each lesson dealt with one passion, and that each Passion learnt the lesson suited to himself.

14. *Forceful*, full of force or might; powerful in producing effects.

15. *Madness ruled the hour*, they were all, for the time, excited to the degree of madness.

16. *Expressive power*, power of expressing passion by music.

17. *Hand*, governed by *laid* in the next line.

18. *Bewildered*, in bewilderment, with a bewildered air.

22. *Lightnings*, fiery flashes, or glances. *Owned his secret stings*, showed how keenly he felt, though unseen by others, the effects of his own violence. "Anger hurts the man who is possessed with it, more than any other against whom it is directed."—*Clarendon*.

24. *Swept*, ran his fingers rapidly over.

25. *Woeful measures*, melancholy strains. *Despair*—agreeing with *beguiled*.

26. *Low sullen sound*—in apposition with "*mournful measures*." *Beguiled*, tried to forget.

28. *Wild*, expressive of strong emotion, intense excitement or bewilderment.

29. *With eyes so fair*. Wordsworth calls Hope "bright-eyed queen".

30. *Delighted measure*, joyous strain.

32. *Lovely scenes at distance*, delightful prospects in the far future. Cf. Campbell's lines (*Pleasures of Hope*, ll. 7—10).

> "'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view,
> And robes the mountain in its azure hue.
> Thus with delight we linger to survey,
> The promised joys of life's unmeasured way."

At distance—adjectival to *scenes*. *Hail*, welcome.

33. *Still*, constantly. So also in l. 35.

34-5. *From the rocks......echo*, she made the rocks, woods and valleys resound with her joyous song.

36. *Where*, in those parts of her song in which.

37. *Responsive voice*, that is, the echo.

39. *Had she sung*, she would have sung.

41. *In thunder*, with thundering sound; with a deafening clash.

45. *Were ne'er prophetic......woe*, sounds which fore-boded evil were never so full of woe; evil was never fore-boded by more calamitous or unhappy sounds.

47. *Doubling drum*, drum which gave the signal for the forces to double, that is, to unite their ranks or files, in order to form themselves into battle array.

50. *Soul-subduing*, having the power of subduing the violent passions of the mind.

52. *Ball of sight*, eye-ball. *Bursting from his head*, starting from their sockets.

53. *Numbers*, verses; song. *To nought were fixed*, did not treat of any one particular subject; was rambling. *Nought*, naught.

55. *Veering*, changing, like the wind.

56. *Raving*, ravingly; in a distracted manner.

57. *With eyes upraised*, looking up to heaven. Milton in *Il Penseroso* addresses Melancholy as follows:

> "Come, but keep thy wonted state,
> With even step and musing gait,
> And looks commercing with the skies,
> Thy wrapt soul sitting in thine eyes."

59-60. *Sequestered*, solitary or retired. *By distance made more sweet*, rendered softer and sweeter by being heard from a distance; "mellowed by distance" (Byron's "*Don Juan*," I, cxxii, l. 4).

61. *Mellow*, soft-toned. *Horn*, a musical instrument originally made of horn, but afterwards of brass. *Poured her pensive soul*, expressed her sad thoughts.

63. *Runnels*, rivulets or small brooks. The form is archaic: we now use *runlet* in its place. *Joined the sound*, mingled their sound with the sound of her song.

64. *Glades and glooms*, open and shady parts of the wood. *Mingled measure*, the sound of her song blending with the sound of the bubbling brooklets.

65. *Haunted stream*, stream haunted by elves or fairies, and therefore liked by poets and persons of contemplative turn of mind. Milton (*L'Allegro*, ll. 129-30) speaks of:

> "Such sights as youthful poets dream,
> On summer eves by haunted stream."

With fond delay, lingering on the spot, because unwilling to leave it. "*Fand delay*," is delay caused by fondness or love for the spot.

66. *Round*, around—an adverb modifying *diffusing*.

68. *Hollow murmurs*, low grave murmuring sounds.

69. *How altered was its sprightlier tone*—a condensed way of saying: "How its tone altered so as to become sprightlier." *Sprightlier*—is used prloeptically. *Its*—stands for "the song" implied in "the veering song" of l. 55. It cannot stand for this latter phrase, as the song of Melancholy did not *change* into the song of Cheerfulness, but the latter took the place of the former.

71. *Her bow*. Cheerfulness is represented as a huntress, hunting being an exersise calculated to promote that quality. *Flung*, being flung or thrown. Diana is represented with a bow thrown across her shoulders.

72. *Buskins*, a kind of high-heeled boot which was worn by Greek tragic actors, as well as hunters. *Gemmed*, studded as if with gems.

73. *Inspiring*, lively or animating; calculated to stir up the emotions of the soul. *That*, so that—a common construction in Elizabethan English. *Rung*, resounded; re-echoed the sound.

74. *The hunter's call*, the signal for hunters to assemble for the hunt or chase—in apposition with *air*. *Faun and dryad*, Fauns and Dryads—the singular used for the plural. *Fauns*, or Fauna in Roman mythology, were rural deities of the Italian mythology, represented as having the legs, feet, and ears of goat, and the rest of the body human. They were called satyrs by the Greeks. The peasants offered them a lamb or kid with great solemnity. *Dryads* or *Dryades*, in Greek mothology, were nymphs that presided over the woods. Oblations of milk, oil, and honey were offered to them, and sometimes the votaries sacrificed a goat. They were not generally considered immortal, but as genii, whose lives were terminated with the tree over which they were supposed to preside. *Known*, familiar.

75. *The oak crowned sisters*, the wood-nymphs (Dryads and Hamadryads) who were in attendance on Diana. They were appropriately adorned with oak-leaves, their very name being derived from that of the oak (Gr. *drus*, an oak). *Their chaste-oyed queen*, their Queen Diana, the goddess of virginity and chastity. Diana, called Artemis by the Greeks was the protectress of the young, and the goddess of flocks and the chase. She was a maiden divinity never conquered by love, and was therefore considered the goddess of chastity.

76. *Satyrs*, a class of demi-gods of the woods, in Greek mythology, who are inseparably connected with the worship of Dionysius (Bacchus and represent the luxuriant vital powers of nature. They are represented with bristly hair, pointed ears like those of animals, two small horns on their heads, and a tail like that of a horse or a goat. They are described as fond of wine and of every kind of sensual pleasure. Later writers confound them with the Italian Fauni, and represent them with larger horns, and goats' feet. *Sylvan boys*, that is, young satyrs.

77. *From forth*—a common poetical inversion, of "forth from." *Alleys*, walks or avenues in a garden or wood.

78. *Brown*—because exercise in the open air, like hunting or riding, embrowns or tans the complexion.

79. *Sport.* Hunting is particularly meant. *Beechen spear*, spear with shaft made of the wood of the beech tree. The spear meant is that used in hunting.

80. *Joy's ecstatic trial*, rapturous trial of joy's "expressive power" (l. 16)

81-2. *Viny crown*, diadem of vine-leaves. Bacchus, the god of wine, was represented as wearing a wreath of vine (or ivy) leaves, and the poet transfers it to joy, who may be supposed to be nearly related to Bacchus. *Addressed*, applied.

93. *Saw*, that is, saw hanging on the myrtles (l. II)- *Brisk-awakening*, awakening or rousing to liveliness ; exciting and lively. *Viol*, a stringed instrument resembling the violin or fiddle, but larger.

84-5. *They would have thought.........maids*, the air that he played was so enchanting that those who heard it wuld have thought that they were listening to the music to which the Muses dance. *Tempe's vale*, the valley of Tempe, between Mount Olympus at the north and Ossa at the south, through which the river Peneus flows into the Ægean. The poets have described it as the most delightful spot on the earth, with continually cool shades and verdant walks, which the warbling of birds rendered more pleasant and romantic, and which the gods often honoured with their presence. It was a favourite haunt of Apollo and the Muses. *Her native maids*, the Muses, who were born in Pieria, at the foot of Mount Olympus.

86. *Festal*, full of festivity or mirthful enjoyment. *Sounding*, resounding ; echoing the sounds of festivity. If the two epithets were connected by a hyphen, they might be taken together as a compound epithet meaning "resounding with festive mirth."

88. *To*, in accompaniment to the music or playing of.

89. *His*—stands for *minstrel*. *Flying*, passing rapidly over the strings. *Kissed*, touched gently or softly.

90. *Love framed.........round*, Love and Mirth went through lively and fanciful figures of a circular dance. Milton has "light fantastic round."

91. *Loose*, flying loosely in the air. *Her*, Mirths. *Zone*, belt *Unbound*, unfastened (so that she might dance with greater freedom of movement).

92. *He*, Love. *Frolic*, frolicsome; sportive. Milton uses *frolic* as an adjective in *L'Allegro* (l. 18): "The frolic wind that breathes the spring."

93. *The charming air repay*, give her something in return for the delightful strains played by the minstrel.

94. *Wings*. Love, or Cupid, is represented as a beautiful *winged* boy.

95. *Sphere-descended*, come down from the spheres or heavenly bodies. There is an allusion here to the Pythagorean theory of the Music of the Spheres. He taught that the motions of the heavenly bodies were so regulated that each gave forth a particular note of music, and all together produced an enchanting harmony, inaudible to mortals.

96. *Wisdom's aid*—because music soothes the emotions, and thereby assists meditation.

97. *Denied*—refers to *lyre*, in the next line.

99. *That loved Athenian bower*, the "magic cell" of l. 4; see note thereon.

101. *Mimic*, possessed of imitative skill. A good musician can reproduce any piece that he hears played.

103. *Thy*. It is difficult to account for the poet's passing from *thou* into *you*, and returning again to *thou*.

104. *Devote*, devoted—a common form of the perfect participle in Elizabethan English. We still use *situate* as a perfect participle.

105-6. *Elder time*, earlier age or period. *Energic*, energetic; vigorous.

107. *The wonders of that god-like age*. The reference is to the age of Amphion and Orpheus, the earliest musicians of Greece.

The former acquired such skill in music that he is said to have invented the art, and to have built the walls of Thebes by the sound of his lyre. Orpheus played on the lyre with such a masterly hand that even the most rapid rivers ceased to flow, the savage beasts of the forest forgot their wildness, and rocks and trees moved to listen to his song. These are the "wonders" alluded to.

108. *Thy recording Sister*, Poetry, which is intimately connected with music, being music expressed in words, as music is poetry without words.

110. *Reed*, the "oaten stop" of the *Ode to Evening*, l. 1. *Could more prevail*, had greater power over the mind.

111. *Rage*, enthusiasm, inspiration.

112. *Laggard*, sluggish or inactive.

113. *Together found*, found united in one single instrument (and not by the combination of a number of musical instruments which forms the organ).

114. *Cecilia's mingled world of sound*, the blending together of different kinds of sound in the organ. St. Cecilia is said to have invented the organ. Dryden calls her the "inventress" of the vocal frame. She was a Roman lady of good family who suffered martyrdom for her devotion to Christianity, about 230 A. D. She is regarded as the patroness of church music, and indeed of music generally. She is generally represented singing, and playing on some musical instrument, or listening to the performance of an angelic visitant. This last circumstance is derived from an ancient legend, which relates that an angel was so enraptured with her strains as to quit the abodes of bliss to visit the saint.

115. *Our vain endeavours*—in the province of music.

116. *Just designs*, correct musical ideas.

117. *Thy*. The poet is still apostrophising Music.

Ode to Evening.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

The 'Ode to Evening' is descriptive of natural scenery, and such a scene of enchanting repose was never exhibited by Claude. Its harmony is so perfect that it requires no rhyme; the objects are so happily chosen, and the simplest epithets convey ideas and feelings so congenial to each other, as to throw the reader into the very mood over which the personified being so beautifully designed presides No other poem on the same subject has the same magic. —*Sir Egerton Brydges.*

l. *Oaten stop.* flute or pipe made from the straw of the oat plant; the *tenius avena* (or slender oaten straw or reed) of Virgil. *Stop,* properly a contrivance for regulating the sounds of a musical instrument, is here used by synecdoche for the instrnment itself, and then by metonomy for "rural song." Virgil, in his sixth eclogue, speaks of "exercising his royal muse on the slender reed (*tenius avena*)." *Pastoral song,* pastoral poetry, which in the strict sense of the term, is poetry which treats of the actions and conversation of *shepherds,* and the scenes and circumstances connected with the tendance of flocks. The term, however, is more loosely applied to the poetical description of *rural objects generally.* The earliest writer of pastoral poetry was Theocritus of Syracuse, whose *Idyle* are exquisitely beautiful and true to nature.

The following is Pope's description of pastoral poetry:

"A pastoral is an imitation of the action of a shepherd, or one considered under that character. The form of this imitation is dramatic, or narrative, or mixed of both; the fable simple, the manners not too polite nor too rustic; the thoughts are plain, yet admit a little quickness and passion, but that short and flowing: the expression humble, yet as pure as the language will afford; neat, but not florid; easy, and yet lively. In short, the fable, manners, thoughts, and expressions are full of the greatest simplicity in nature.

The complete character of this poem consists in simplicity, breavity, add delicacy; the two first of which render an eclogue natural, and the last delightful."

2. *Chaste Eve.* Evening is called *chaste*, on account of its subdued sober light, which is an emblem of modesty, and therefore of purity. *Modest ear.* (The eqithet is a transferred one.)

3. *Solemn springs*, springs or fountains as they appear in the "dim religious light" of evening.

5. *Nymph*, beautiful maiden. The Nymphs, in Greek mythology, are a class of female divinities of an inferior rank, represented as beautiful maidens. There were several classes of them, such as: 1. *Oceanids*, nymphs of the ocean, daughters of Oceanus; 2. *Nereids*, nymphs of the Mediterranean or inner sea, daughters of Nereus; 3. *Potameides*, river nymphs; 4. *Naiads*, nymphs of fresh-water rivers, lakes, brooks, or springs; 5. *Oreads*, nymphs of mountains, and grottos; and 6. *Dryads* and *Hamadryads*, tree-nymphs, (Gr. *drus*, oak or other wild-growing lofty tree), believed to die together with the trees which had been their abode, and with which they had come into existence. *Reserved*, of reserved or retiring disposition. The epithet refers to the stillness and quiet of evening. *Bright-haired.* The golden rays of the setting sun are compared to golden hair on a person's head.

6. *Western tent, i e.*, the western sky, spoken of as the tent into which the sun retires to rest. *Whose cloudy skirts*, the clouds forming a fringe or border to which.

7. *Brede* braid—from A. S. *bredon*, to knit, whence also *embroider* and *border*. *Ethereil*, composed of air; aërial—properly, pertaining to the higher regions beyond the atmosphere.

8. *O'erhang*, remain suspended in the air above. *His wavy bed*, the undulated surface of the ocean, on which he sinks to rest.

9. *Air is hushed*, there is no movement or sound in the air. *Week-eyed*, having eyes that cannot stand a strong light. Bats and owls have such eyes, and therefore go about in the dusk or dark.

10. *Short shrill shriek.* Note the alliteration and onomatopœia. *Leathern wing.* The wing of the bat is not formed of feathers like that of birds, but of a membrane resembling very thin parchment.

11-12. *The beetle winds......horn*, the beetle makes its low humming sound. The beetle referred to is *dor-beetle*, a very common English insect, which may be seen at the approach of evening, whirling round in the air with a dull, humming sound. Brydges is inclined to think that Gray borrowed l. 7 of his *Elegy* from these lines of Collins's.

13. *Rises*, flies up from the ground. The beetle is hatched from an egg laid in the ground, on a dunghill or the like, and after going through certain stages of development, emerges from it a perfect insect, and begins to fly about at once. The poet seems to be referring here to beetles which have just emerged from the ground.

14. *Pilgrim*, traveller. *Borne*, being borne or carried (by the inpetuosity of its own flight). *In heedless hum*, as it flies heedlessly, or with reckless impetuosity, and with humming sound.

15-16. *Maid composed*, calm maiden. *Softened strain*, song sung in subdued or low tones.

17. *Numbers*, poetry or verse which is regulated by poetic measure, as divisions of time, a number of syllables, &c.) *Stealing*, being heard in low, almost inaudible tones.

18. *Unseemly*, in an unseemly or unbecoming manner. *Not unseemly suit*—a litotes for "*very well suit.*" *Unseemly*, which is an adjective, is used also as an adverb, as *unseemlily* would be intolerably cacophonous or harsh.

19-20. *Musing slow*, engaged in quiet meditation. *Hail*, welcome. *Genial*, agreeable or pleasant.

21. *Thy folding-star*, the star which makes thee fold or close; the evening star at whose rising thou comest to a close.

22. *Paly*—a poetical form of *pale*. *Circlet*, small circle or disc. *At his warning lamp*, when he shines forth to announce thy departure (and the coming of night.)

23. *The fragrant Hours*, the hours which diffused fragrance over the earth through the day. The poet may be simply personify-

ing the hours of the daytime; but more probably he is referring to the Hours, or *Horæ*, of classic mythology, who were three sisters, daughters of Jupiter and Themis, according to Hesiod called Eunomia, Dice, and Irene. They were the goddesses of the seasons, and presided over the spring, summer, and winter, and were represented by the poets as opening the gates of heaven and of Olympus. The Horæ of spring accompanied Persephone (or Proserpine) every year on her ascent from the lower world; and the attributes of spring flowers, fragrance, and graceful freshness—are accordingly transferred to the Horæ. Hence they bear a resemblance to, and are mentioned along with, the Charites (or Graces), and both are frequently confounded or identified. *Elves*, fairies. Fairies are represented as beautiful beings, extremely diminutive in size, so much so that they could get into acorn-cups or even small flowers or buds. There are good and bad fairies: the former are called elves, fays, &c., and the later, urchins, ouches, &c.

24. *In buds*, inside the buds of flowers. *The day*, during the day or daytime.

25. *Many a Nymph........ sedge*, many a water-nymph or Naiad: see note on l. 10. The Naiads were represented as growned with wreaths of sedge. *Sedge*, a plant with large-bladed leaves growing in wet grounds or on the banks of rivers.

26. *Sheds the freshening dew*, drops the evening dew which renews or restores the freshness of Nature.

27. *The pensive Pleasures sweet*—the personification of the pleasures arising from meditation, to which the quiet evening time is particularly favourable.

28. *Thy shadowy car.* As Nox or night was represented in classic mythology as riding round the world, in a chariot, usually described as drawn by bats and owls, the poet supposes that Evening also has a similar car, drawn by the Hours, Elves, Nymphs, and the Pleasures. *Shadowy*—on account of the shade or gloom of evening time.

29. *Roam*—used transitively for "*roam over*". *Heathy*, desolate and unfrequented. The usual meaning of the word is "over-

grown with heath or heather." The other version of the stanza, quoted in Dr. Bradshaw's Anthology and given below, shows the former to be the meaning here :

"Then lead, calm Votaress, where some sheety lake
Cheers the *lone heath*, or some time-hallowed hill
Or upland fallows gray
Reflect its last cool gleam"

30. *Its*—stands for *scene*. *Dells*, small retired valleys.

31. *More awful*, in a more awful or awe-inspiring manner than they do by daylight. *Nod*, totter ; look as if about to fall.

32. *By thy religious gleams*, when seen by the dim light of evening. *Religious*, calculated to inspire religious or solemn thoughts. Milton speaks in his *Il Penseroso* of :

"Storied windows richly dight
Casting a dim religious light."

33. *Blustering*, roaring ; loud. *Driving*, rushing with violence ; beating furiously against things.

34. *Willing*—to roam over such a scene or amid such a ruin —a transferred epithet. Cf. Milton's *Il Penseroso*.

"Let my due feet never fail.
To walk the studious cloister's pale."—

Be mine the hut, the hut be mine : I will remain in the cottage. *That views*, that commands a view of ; from which I can see.

37. *Brown*—because seen from a distance, and consisting of straw-thatched houses. *Dim-discovered*, dimly or indistinctly seen (on account of the distance). *Spires*—of churches.

38. *Simple bell*—as contrasted with the grand bells, or peals of bells, in town churches.

39-40. *Draw the gradual dusky veil*, gradually draw thy dusky veil ; gradually spread thy gloom.

41. *Wont*, is accustomed. *Wont* is the past tense of the old verb *won*, to be accustomed (A. S. *wonian*, to dwell ; to continue) and is so used by Shakespeare, Spenser, and Milton, though it is

now never used except as a perfect participle, and that only predicatively.

> "Talbot is taken, when we *wont* to fear."
> 1 *Henry VI*, I, ii, 14.
>
> "On that great Lord, which therein *wont* to dwell."
> Spenser's *Prothalamion* l. 139.
>
> "Wherewith he *wont* at Heaven's high council-table"
> To sit in the midst of Trinal Unity."
> Milton's *Hymn on the Nativity*, ll. 9-10.

42. *Breathing*, exhaling fragrance; fragrant. *Tresses*. The flowers which give forth their fragrance when the light evening shower falls on them, are apparently meant by *tresses*.

44. *Lingering*. In summer the days are long, and the evening twilight lasts longer than in any other season. Hence the epithet "lingering," *i. e.*, delaying as if unwilling to go away.

45. *Sallow*, of a pale, sickly, yellowish colour. The epithet well describes the colour of fading leaves. *With leaves*. In autumn the leaves of trees (except evergreen ones) fade and fall off leaving the trees, is cold climates, entirely bare of them.

46. *Yelling*, screaming loud. The allusion is to the howling of the wind in winter. *Troublous*, disturbed or agitated by stormy winds.

47, *The shrinking trains*, namely, the Hours, Elves, Nymphs, and the Pleasures, (ll. 23—8), which are frightened by the storminess of winter.

48. *Rends thy robes*, that is, dissipates or scatters the light of evening, and brings on the darkness of night. In winter the twilight begins early, and its duration is very short.

49—51. *Thy quiet rule*, the calm gentle influence that thou exercisest on them. Evening is favourable to Fancy, Friendship, &c. *Own*, acknowledge.

Life of Robert Burns.

Robert Burns, the beloved national poet of Scotland, was born in Ayr on Jan. 25, 1759. His early home was merely a clay or mud cottage, which we learn that his father himself built.

Robert Burness, the father, was a gardener, and his wife (Agnes Brown) gave him six children, the poet "Robbie" being the eldest. The boy was a genius and in spite of his work in the fields, to which he was forced in order to help to support his parents, he soon became intimate with many books, more especially with some of the older Scottish poets. At six years old, we are told, he could read well, and as the years went on he acquired a knowledge of English and Scottish classics, together with a smattering of French and Mathematics.

When his father died, Robbie Burns took a small farm with his brother Gilbert, but in farming he did not succeed and he resolved to give up his share to his more serious and sedate brother, and himself to emigrate to Jamaica, in order to take up work on a plantation there.

This exile however did not come off, for, while unsettled and feeling himself a dead failure at his farm work, he published a small volume of poems to the great delight of his rustic friends. They were published at Kilmarnock in 1786, and, being in his native dialect, were soon beloved, and familiar to all the people.

Dr. Laurie of Loudon, did Burns a good turn by sending the poems, with a short notice of the poet to Dr. Blacklock (the blind poet) in Edinburgh. He was so pleased with them, that he invited Burns to visit him in that City, and there introduced him to many of the celebrities of the day. He became popular, and, making £500 by a second edition of his poems, he again began farming. Before this however he had married in Scottish fashion his 'Bonnie Jean' of whom we seem to know so much from Burn's poem addressed to her. This was one of the saddest episodes in Burns' life, and equally sad and romantic was his love for "Hieland Mary." He might now have done well, but he was careless, financed badly, and was very soon again in difficulties. He was obliged once more to give up farming and had now only the small income left which he derived from his work in the excise Department. His spirits were broken; intemperance and unrestrained passions had done their work and Burns died in 1796, when only 37 years of age. He left to literature some precious gems, foremost among which we must place 'Tam O'Shanter,' 'Hallowe'en. 'The Vision,' 'The Jolly Beggars,' and 'The Cotter's Saturday Night. Many of his works are unsurpassed; in fact Burns is regarded as one of the greatest of lyric poets, and in the Cotter's Saturday night we have him at his very best.

He was always poor, and in the perpetual search for money much of his best power was wasted and lost.

Burns was his own worst enemy, and doubtless his intemperance and amours were the real cause of his poverty, and the desperate struggle he had for existence. That he felt this himself, is clearly shown in many of his

verses: but how he thought on this subject is shown best in those beautiful lines :—

Is there a man, whose judgment clear,
Can others teach his course to steer,
Yet runs himself, life's mad career,
Wild as the wave ?—
Here pause—and through the starting tear
Survey this grave.

Had Burns lived to old age, he would doubtless have improved as did Dryden: but he would always have had to fight against an untrained nature, and the want of education. But had he been better educated he would never have written 'Tam O'Shanter,' and others of his great poems, which bring out all his feelings as a peasant: and probably education would have taken from him his charming originality. No—in Burns, we have a real genuine poet, and he has been well called 'The Shakespeare of Scotland.'

Burns' Poetry.

Burns was essentially a man of moods, and according to his mood so he wrote. It is for this reason that there is such variety in his poems. So quick was his transition from one mood to another, that we find him, almost at the same time, composing two such utterly different poems as "The Cotter's Saturday Night" and "The Holy Fair." One is almost a satire on the other. These satirical poems of Burns are most unpleasant and were

evidently written for effect, probably to gain the applause of those boon companions with whom he consorted, when the sensual intemperate mood was upon him.

But that in his heart Burns was a religious man we can feel sure, and the clash of the evil and good spirits within him led to the conception at one and the same time of poems containing very evil thoughts, and others full of all that was good and pure and elevating.

Though not actually at his best in the *Cotter's Saturday Night*, it is undoubtedly an exposition of all that was best in Burns as a man, and one which has caused his name to be more loved, than any of his other poems.

It is to the formula and sentiment used in every Scottish family when beginning worship "Let us worship God" that the world owes "The Cotter's Saturday Night" and as Lockhart truly says. "It would be most injurious if not to the genius of the poet, at least to the character of the man, to exclude it from the collection of his poems." Some of the lines may be weak, and as all are agreed some stanzas heavy, but the whole poem suited the Scotch character in its deep reverence for holy things and for family ties. No wonder that Burns' rustic companions loved him, no wonder that all the common people or peasants adored him. Craik writes that 'The Cotter's Saturday Night,' does not convey any adequate conception of what is brightest and highest in Burns' poetry, "but," as Lockhart says, "there is none of his poems, that does such justice to the better nature that was originally in him."

The poem is dedicated to Robert Aiken, Esq., a writer or lawyer of Ayr, who was a man of cultivated mind,

very warm-hearted, and who drew forth the love and respect of Burns as the following epitaph by the poet shows :—

Know thou, O stranger to the fame
Of this much loved, much honored name!
(For none that knew him, need be told)
A warmer heart death ne'er made cold.

The first verse and inscription of the poem were probably added to it, and the following interesting story is told of the two last verses. Burns was travelling with a friend, and on arriving at Coldstream, where the Tweed forms the dividing line between Scotland and England, the friend (one Mr. Ainslie), suggested that they should cross the river, so that Burns could say he had been in England. This was a favourite pastime among the Scotch laddies, and at this spot, generally chosen for the crossing, the river banks are very beautiful, and the scenery on either side very lovely. Probably Burns' emotional nature was roused by the sight of the beauties of his beloved country, for having crossed the river, he suddenly in a fit of enthusiasm knelt down, and with uplifted hands improvised and recited the two last verses of the Cotter's Saturday Night. Much of Burns poetry is written in metres not found among Southern poets, and this may be attributed to his knowledge of the earlier Scottish poets. These he undoubtedly copied. The Cotter's Saturday Night is written in Spenserian or Alexandrine verse, that is nine lines, of which the first eight are regular pentameters, but the last unlike the others is an hexameter. This metre is commonly used by Thomson and Byron.

NOTES ON

The Cotter's Saturday Night.

1. *Friend.*—Robert Aiken, an Ayr Solicitor, and a great friend of Burns.

2. *Mercenary.*—One hired to write for money.

4. *Dearest meed.*—Most precious reward.

6. *Train.*—Train of events among the poor and lowly. 'Lowly' is a transferred epithet.

6. *Sequester'd.*—Remote from towns:—

> Along the cool *sequestered* vale of life,
> They kept the noiseless tenor of their way. Gray's *Elegy.*

9. *I ween.*—I think, I feel sure.

10. *Blaws.*—Scotch for blows.
Sugh.—'Sough,' a sighing whistling sound.

12. *Frae.*—From. *Pleugh.*—Plough.

13. *Trains o'craws.*—Lines of crows.

15. *Moil.*—Wearisome labour. Cf. the phrase, 'Toiling and moiling.'

17. *The morn.*—Scotch for 'the morrow,' the next day.—'Morn' is from A. S. *morgen*, and German *morgen.*

18. *Hameward.*—Homeward.

19. *Wee things.*—Little children. *Toddlin.*—Just learning to walk. Present participle—shortened from of *toddlynd*, not of *toddlyng* which is the Southern form of the participle. *Stacher.*—Stagger.

22. *Flichterin.*—Fluttering—like a brood of young birds.

23. *Wee bit ingle.*—His little fire. *Ingle* is from the Gaelic and Irish *aingeal*, fire. *Blinking bonnily.* Shining prettily. *Blinking* is from the Middle English *blenken*, to shine.

24. *Wifie.*—An affectionate diminutive form. She need not necessarily have been a small woman.

26. *Does.*—The rule about a verb being in the plural when preceded by two or more subjects is here broken. The last subject is

alone looked to. This construction is very common in Shakespeare and not uncommon in Scotch poetry.

Weary carking cares. In the earlier editions of this poem the reading was 'his weary kiaugh and care'—the word *kiaugh* meaning 'anxiety.' Burns made the alteration himself as he thought 'carking cares' would be more easily understood. 'Carking' means 'anxious.'

28. *Belyve.* By-and-by, soon. *Bairns.* Children.

29. *At service out.* Who do not live in their parents' house, but are servants living out at various farm-houses in the neighbourhood.

Gilbert Burns, one of the poet's brothers, says of this poem, "The Cotter, in the *Saturday Night,* is an exact copy of my father in his manners, his family devotion, and exhortations; yet the other parts of the description do not apply to our family. None of us were ever '*at service out amang the farmers roun.*'"

30. *Ca' the pleugh.*—Drive the plough. Probably from ploughmen calling constantly, as they do, to their horses.

Herd.—A verb. Look after cattle, are herdsmen. *Tentie.*—Attentive, here an adverb meaning 'carefully.' Some of the younger ones are errand boys. *Rin.*—Run.

31. *A cannie errand.*—An easy errand Cf. 'ca' cannie,—*i.e.*, go easy. *A neibor town.*—A town in the neighbourhood. Note that *town* and *roun* (l. 29) are to be pronounced *toon* and *roon*, not *town* and *rown.*

33. *Ee.*—Eye.

34. *Braw.*—Fine, brave, handsome.

35. *Deposite.*—With the accent on 'ite'. *Sair-won,*—Hardly earned. 'Sair'=Sore, with difficulty. *Penny fee.*—Wages. Jenny used to bring home her weekly earnings and hand then over to her parents to use if they were hard pressed.

38. *Speirs.*—Enquires.

39. *Social hours.*—Hours thus spent in social intercourse. *Fleet.*—Pass swifty by.

40. *Uncos.*—Uncommon things, news. As a noun this word is rare, but common as an adverb, *e.g.*, 'He's *unco* (=very) deaf.'

41. *Eye, &c.*—Look at their children, young men and women now, who are full of hope for the future.

42. This line is an amplification of the word 'hopeful' in the previous line. They anticipate successful careers in the future, and look forward eagerly to them.

43. *Shears.*—Here 'scissors'—ordinarily the word means a peculiar kind of large scissors for shearing sheep.

44. *Gars.* — Makes. *Claes.* — Clothes. *Amaist.* — Almost. *As weel's.*—As well as.

45. The father of the family as the talk goes on throws out rules for good conduct, admonishing his sons and daughters as to how they should guide themselves in all circumstances. The next verse shows the nature of his 'admonitions.'

47. *Younkers.*—Young people ; *a'*—all.

48. *Eydent.*—Careful, diligent.

49. *Jauk.*—Jest, trifle.

50. Observe the change from the indirect to the direct narration.

51. *Your duty.*—The duty referred to here is obviously that of offering up prayer to God both morning and evening.

52. *Gang.*—Go. We have this word in a ship's 'gang-way.'

56. *Wha kens.*—Who knows. Milton uses 'ken' as a noun. *O'the same.*—Of the knock.

58. *Convoy her hame.*—See her safely home. 'Convoy' is a verb in the infinitive. It is a differentiated form of 'convey.'

59. *Wily.*—Used here in a good sense,—clever and observant. *The conscious flame.* The blush on her cheek which showed her daughter's love for the 'neibor lad.' 'Conscious' is a transferred epithet.

61. The mother is very anxious when she sees in her daughter's looks the signs of love — lest it should be some worthless young fellow, so she enquires his name.

62. *Hafflins.*—Half, almost. *Rake.*—Dissolute fellow.

64. *Ben.*—Inside A. S. *binnan*, within. Cf. the Scotch phrase '*But* and *ben*,' without and within. '*But*' meaning without is from the A. S. *butan*.

65. *Strappan.*—Strapping, fine, well set up. *Takes.*—Pleases.

67. *Blithe.*—Gay and happy.

The visits no ill ta'en.—The visit is not ill taken, *i.e.*, that her parents approve of the young man.

67. *Cracks of.*—Talks familiarly of

Kye.—Scotch for cows. In English the word is *kine*. A. S. *cu*, plural *cy*. The English 'kine' is a double plural *ky* and *en*.

68. *Artless.*—Simple.

69. *Blate.*—Bashful. *Lathefu.'*—Shy, sheepish.

72. *The lave.*—The rest, like other girls.

73—90. Observe the entire absence of Scotch words and phrase in these two verses.

75. *I've pacéd much.*—I've seen much of life.

78. *Cordial.*—Heart-filling pleasure.

Melancholy vale.—This valley of life in which there is so much unhappiness.

80. *The tender tale.*—Of love.

81. *The milk white thorn.*—The hawthorn bush.

Cf. The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade.
For talking age and whispering lovers made.

Goldsmiths' *Deserted Village.*

86. *Curse on.*—If such a base man there be, who can deliberately lay himself out to seduce an innocent confiding girl, like Jenny, may a curse rest upon him.

86. *Dissembling smooth.*—Concealing by smooth speeches his wicked intention.

89. *Points.*—Supply 'that' before this word.

90. *Paints.*—Makes the seducer see clearly, as it were in a picture, the misery of the girl he has ruined and the wild despair and distraction of her parents.

92. *Holesome parritch.*—Wholesome porridge. 'Porridge' is a Scotch dish made of oatmeal boiled and eaten with milk and salt, or sugar.

93. *The soupe.*—The drink.

Hawkie.—Cow, properly a cow with a white stripe down its face.

94. *'Yont.*—Beyond, behind. *Hallan.*—Partition wall—*Chows her cood.*—Chews her cud.

95. *In complimental mood.*—Wishing to do something more than usual to show her approval of the lad.

96. *Weel-hained.*—Well—kept. *Kebbuck.*—Cheese. Of Gaelic origin.

Fell.—The word has not a bad meaning here, though it usually means, as an adjective, 'cruel,' 'dire.' In the text it means 'sharp,' 'biting,' 'tasty.'

97. *Prest.*—Urged to take some more cheese.

99. *Towmond auld.*—Twelve months old. *Sin.*—Since.

Lint was i' the bell.—Flax was in bloom, or flowering. It has a bright blue bell-like flower.

101. *Ingle.*—Fire, or here, perhaps fireside.

Patriarchal.—Like one of the ancient patriarcles.

103. *Ha' Bible.*—Hall Bible. It being customary to have a large family Bible kept in the hall or dining room for the purpose of family worship.

104. *Bonnet.*—In English this word is only applied to a woman's head-dress, but in Scotch it means a large kind of cap worn by men. Apparently the old ploughman had been wearing his 'bonnet' all the evening to keep his head warm, but now, when he is preparing to offer up evening prayers, he lays it aside, baring his head in the presence of God, as it were.

105. *Lyart.*—Grey. *Haffets.*—Temples.

Wearing thin.—The hair over his temples is getting thin from old age.

106. *Those strains, &c.*—From those strains, &c., referring to the Psalm's of David in the Bible.

107. *Wales.*—Selects, chooses.

110. *By far the noblest aim.*—It is much nobler to sing praises to God from the heart than to be able to sing them well from a musical point of view.

111—113. *Dundee's, Martyrs, Elgin.*—These are the names of Scotch Psalm tunes. Burns' father not being a musician or even an educated man knew only these three familiar tunes.

Beets.—Increases. To 'beet' in Scotch means to put more fuel on the fire.

114. *The sweetest.*—This refers to the three tunes mentioned, which, in the opinion of the Poet, were the three best and sweetest of all the Psalm tunes used in Scotland.

115. *Italian trills, &c.*—The ornate music written by Italians is wanting in force, is insipid.

116. *Tickled ear.*—When listening to a trilling Italian tune the ear may be pleased ('tickled') but the heart remains cold.

117. *Nae unison, &c.*—Italian tunes or 'trills' are out of harmony with songs 'to the praise and glory of God.'

118. *The priest-like father.*—"The father of our poet is described by one who knew him towards the latter end of his life as above the common stature, thin, and bent with labour. His countenance was serious and expressive, and the scanty locks on his head were grey. He was of a religious turn of mind, and, as is usual among the Scottish peasantry, a good deal conversant in speculative theology. He wrote a small manual of religious belief, in the form of a dialogue between a father and his son, in which the benevolence of his heart seems to have led him to soften the rigid Calvinism of the Scottish Church into something approaching Arminianism. He was a devout man and in the practice of calling his family together to join in prayer. The exquisite picture in the Cotter's Saturday Night, represents William Burness and his family at their evening devotions."

119. *How Abram.*—(Called afterwards Abraham.) See JAMES ii, 23. "The scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God." See also 2 CHRONICLES xx, 7.

120. *Moses bade, &c.*—See Exodus xvii 14—16. And the Lord said unto Moses, write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembereance of Amalek from under heaven.

And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi:

For he said, because the Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.

122. *Bard or Poets.*—David was the father of Hebrew Psalmody hence his title Bard. In olden days the book of Psalms was attributed to him; later on it was found that only certain Psalms were his composition but in these and many other places in the Bible we trace the lyrical genius of David.

122-3. In order to understand these lines the whole of 2 Samuel, Chapter XXIV in the Bible should be read—or 1 Chronicles. Chapter XXI.

124-5. *Job's pathetic plaint......or rapt Isaiah's wild seraphic fire.* Many passages in the books called JOB and ISAIAH will afford examples of pathos, and ecstatic vision and prophecy.

Job is the type of the man who bears the greatest affliction with the greatest patience.

Isaiah is the greatest of the inspired prophets. By 'rapt' is meant 'inspired.'

Cf. . . . . O Thou my voice inspire,
Who touch'd Isaiah's hollowed lips with fire.

Pope. *The Messiah.*

127. *The Christian volume.*—The allusions in lines 118—129 are all to the Old Testament in the Bible. The Poet now passes on to the New Testament, which deals with the subject of Christianity. "The priest-like father" would one day read passages from the Old Testament and the next, perhaps, from the New.

128—130. *Guiltless blood, &c.*—The blood of Christ. The allusion is to the Christian scheme of Salvation—showing how Christ came into this world (was "incarnated") to save sinners, being himself the second Person of the Blessed Trinity,—the Father, the SON and the Holy Ghost.

While on earth he had no fixed dwelling place. He himself says in Matthew viii, 20. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." See also Luke ix, 58.

131. *Sped.*—Fared. The New Testament gives the history not only of Christ, but also of his 12 disciples and those who followed Him, believing in Him.

132. *The precepts sage, &c.*—The reference is to the various Gospels, and Epistles written by his disciples—the Apostles.

133. *He, who lone in Patmos.*—John, one of the disciples was banished to Patmos, an island in the Aegean Sea, in A.D. 94, and there had the mighty vision contained in the Book of Revelation. See Chapter I of the Revelation of St. John the Divine,—especially verses 13 to 20.

135. *Great Bab'lon's doom.*—The chief city of the Assyrian Empire. See Revelation, Chapter XVIII verses 10 to end.

136. *Then kneeling down.*—The three stages of family worship usually, though not invariably, consist of—*first* in singing a hymn, while *standing*, secondly in reading while *sitting* a portion of scripture selected by the head of the family, and *thirdly* in *kneeling* down to offer prayer and praise to God.

138. "*Springs exulting,*" *&c.*—The quotation is from Pope's *Windsor Forest*, line 112.

139. *Thus.*—In the posture of praise round the throne of God.

140. *There ever bask, &c.*—See Revelation vii to 15—17.

"Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more: neither shall the sun light on them. Nor any heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them into living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Uncreated rays.—The light that emanates from the presence of God,—'the brightness of His presence.'

142. *Hymning.*—Singing hymns of praise.

144. *Time.*—In Heaven Time is not, like a circle it has no beginning or end. See Revelation x, 6. 'There should be time no longer.'

145-6.—*Compared with this, &c.*—Compared with the simple patriarchal form of worship described, what a poor thing is *ritual* ('the pomp of method, and of art.')

148. *Except the heart.*—Except (that of) the heart.

149. *The Power.*—God, the Almighty being angered at the mere display of worship without any heart-service in it, will reject it.

150. *Pompous strain.*—Full tones of the organ.

Sacerdotal.—Priestly.

Stole.—The 'stole' is a long scarf worn over the shoulders and falling down in front on each side by Roman Catholic and Church of England Clergymen.

151. *Is some.*—Read 'In some.'

152. *May hear.*—God may hear.

The language of the soul.—True heart-worship.

153. *Book of Life.*—See Revelation xx, 12.

154. *Take off.*—Go. *Sev'ral.*—Separate.

155. *Youngling Cottagers.*—The "toddlin wee things" (l. 21.)

156. *Secret homage.*—Private prayers to God.

158. *Stills the raven's, &c.*—Feeds the young of the raven. Psalm cxlvii, 9.

159. *The lily fair.*—See the Gospel of St. Matthew VI, 28 and 29.

162. *Chiefly.*—More especially do they ask God, in their prayers, to fill their hearts with heavenly grace.

165. *Princes and lords.*—An echo of Goldsmith's lines:—

Princes and lords may flourish or may fade,
A breath can make them as a breath has made.

166. "*An honest man,*" *&c.*—This line is from Pope's *Essay on Man*, l. 248.

167. *Certes.*—Of a surety, certainly. An archaic expression.

174. *Of rustic toil.*—Who work in the fields.

177. *Luxury's contagion.*—'Luxury' appears to be used here in its worst sense of 'vice'.

178. *Howe'er crown's, &c.*—Whatever changes there may be in forms of Government.

180. *Isle.*—Scotland never was a separate island, but the poet generously includes England, we will presume, in his invocation.

181. *The patriotic tide.*—The deep feelings of patriotism.

Wallace.—A great Scotch patriot born in 1276, beheaded at Stirling in 1365.

Everybody knows the poem by Burns beginning,—

Scot's wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots wham Bruce has often led, &c.

183. *Tyrannic pride.*—The pride of the English tyrant, then ruling—Edward I.

SHELLEY.

INTRODUCTION.

I. Life of Shelley.

Percy Bysshe Shelley, the eminent poet, was the eldest son of Sir Timothy Shelley, Bart., the representative of an old Sussex family, and was born at Field Place, near Horsham, in that county, on August 4, 1792. His earlier education he received at home with his sisters. When ten years of age, he was put to a public school, Sion House, where he was harshly treated both by his instructors and by tyrannical schoolfellows. He was fond of reading, especially wild romances and tales of *diablerie*; and when very young he wrote two novels, *Zastrozzi*, and *St. Irvyne, or the Rosicrucian*. From Sion House, Shelley was removed to Eton, where his sentitive spirit was again wounded by ill-usage and by the system of fagging tolerated at Eton. In his refusal to fag at Eton, he gave early indication of that passionate impatience of every form of constituted authority not approved of by his reason which continued through life to distinguish him, and to find expression in his writings. At Eton he not only improved his knowledge of Greek and Latin, but added French and German to his intellectual stores. He quitted Eton in 1808, and returned to his father's house, where he finished two romances commenced at Eton, and wrote verses to a cousin with whom he had fallen in love. He proceeded to the University of

Oxford in 1810, and in his second year of residence printed an anonymous "Defence of Atheism." The object he seems to have had in view was not so much to express his own opinions as to excite discussion, and to draw forth the ideas of others upon his theses. He sent copies of his pamphlet to the heads of colleges, who having heard that he was the author, summoned him before them. He was requested to say whether he was the author. He declined to do so; but he would not state that he was not. He was expelled. His father refused to see him; upon which he took up his residence in London, where he completed his "Queen Mab." His father becoming reconciled to him, wished him to enter upon a political career, but he soon afterwards incurred his parent's lasting displeasure by marrying at Gretna, Miss Westbrook, the daughter of a retired hotel-keeper. The match proved as unhappy as it was ill-considered. The young pair were without resources; the lady had no sympathy with his peculiar nature. In 1813 a separation by mutual consent took place. He went abroad in the following year, and visited France, Germany, and Switzerland in company with Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, whom he subsequently married. The year 1815 was the happiest he had known for some time. His father agreed to allow him an income of £800 a year; and while residing in Devonshire and at Windsor, he was deeply absorbed with his literary compositions. "Alastor" was produced at this period. In 1816, his committed suicide, whereupon Shelley claimed his two children, the issue of this marriage. But his late wife's father commenced a suit in Chancery, alleging that Shelley, as one holding atheistical opinions, was unfitted to have charge of his offspring. Lord Chancellor Eldon decided that the children should be committed to Mr. Westbrook's care. He felt this deci-

sion to be unjust and tyrannical: and in the "Revolt of Islam," which was written in 1817 made several allusions to the harsh decree. In the following year he left England, to which he was destined never to return. Milan, Rome, Florence, and Leghorn were his halting places during the three succeeding years. It was in that interval that he made the acquaintance of Lord Byron, with whom he passed much of his time. In July, 1822, after being absent some days from his house on the Gulf of Spezzia, he set sail in a boat which belonged to himself in company with his friend Mr. Williams. A squall overtaking the light craft, she went down and the friends perished. His body was afterwards washed ashore; and in accordance with the laws of Tuscany that everything so cast up from the sea should be burned, all that was mortal of the poet was consumed to ashes, which were collected, and afterwards placed in the Protestant burying ground at Rome. Both Lord Byron and Mr. Leigh Hunt were at the last ceremony. In addition to the poems already mentioned, Shelley wrote the tragedy of "The Cenci" and "Adonais," a monody upon the death of Keats, "Prometheus," and a number of smaller pieces.

II. Critical Observations on Shelley's Poems.

[*From Symonds's "Shelley": English Men of Letters Series.*]

As a poet, Shelley contributed a new quality to English literature—a quality of ideality, freedom, and spiritual audacity, which severe critics of other nations think we lack. Byron's daring is in a different region: his elemental worldliness and pungent satire do not liberate our energies, or cheer us with new hopes and splendid vistas. Wordsworth, the very antithesis to

Shelley in his reverent accord with institutions, suits our meditative mood, sustains us with a sound philosophy, and braces us by healthy contact with the Nature he so dearly loved. But in Wordsworth there is none of Shelley's magnetism. What remains of permanent value in Coleridge's poetry—such work as *Christabel*, the *Ancient Mariner*, or *Kubla Khan*—is a product of pure artistic fancy, tempered by the author's mysticism. Keats, true and sacred poet at he was, loved Nature with a somewhat sensuous devotion. She was for him a mistress rather than a Diotima; nor did he share the prophetic fire which burns in Shelley's verse, quite apart from the direct enunciation of his favourite tenets. In none of Shelley's greatest contemporaries was the lyrical faculty so paramount; and whether we consider his minor songs, his odes, or his more complicated choral dramas, we acknowledge that he was the loftiest and the most spontaneous singer of our language. In range of power he was also conspicuous above the rest. Not only did he write the best lyrics, but the best tragedy, the best translations, and the best familiar poems of his century. As a satirist and humourist, I cannot place him so high as some of his admirers do; and the purely polemical portions of his poems, those in which he puts forth his antagonism to tyrants and religions and custom in all its myriad forms, seem to me to degenerate at intervals into poor rhetoric.

While his genius was so varied and its flight so unapproached in swiftness, it would be vain to deny that Shelley, as an artist, had faults from which the men with whom I have compared him were more free. The most prominent of these are haste, incoherence, verbal carelessness, incompleteness, a want of narrative force, and a

weak hold on objective realities. Even his warmest admirers, if they are sincere critics, will concede that his verse, taken altogether, is marked by inequality. In his eager self-abandonment to inspiration, he produced much that is unsatisfying, simply because it is not ripe. There was no defect of power in him, but a defect of of patience; and the final word to be pronounced in estimating the large bulk of his poetry is the word immature. Not only was the poet young; but the fruit of his young mind had been plucked before it had been duly mellowed by reflection. Again, he did not care enough for common things to present them with artistic fulness. He was intolerant of detail, and thus failed to model with the roundness that we find in Goethe's work. He flew at the grand, the spacious, the sublime; and did not always succeed in realizing for his readers what he had imagined. A certain want of faith in his own powers, fostered by the extraordinary discouragement under which he had to write, prevented him from finishing what he began, or from giving that ultimate form of perfection to his longer works which we admire in shorter pieces like the *Ode to the West Wind.* When a poem was ready, he had it hastily printed, and passed on to fresh creative efforts. If any thing occurred to interrupt his energy, he flung the sketch aside. Some of these defects, if we may use this word at all to indicate our sense that Shelley might by care have been made equal to his highest self, were in a great measure the correlative of his chief quality—the ideality, of which I have already spoken. He composed with all his faculties, mental, emotional, and physical, at the utmost strain, at a white heat of intense fervour, striving to attain one object, the truest and most passionate investiture for the thoughts which had inflamed his ever-quick imagination. The result is that his finest work has

more the stamp of something natural and elemental—the wind, the sea, the depth of air—than of a mere artistic product. Plato would have said: the Muses filled this man with sacred madness, and, when he wrote, he was no longer in his own control. There was, moreover, ever-present in his nature an effort, an aspiration after a better than the best this world can show, which prompted him to blend the choicest products of his thought and fancy with the fairest images borrowed from the earth on which he lived. He never willingly composed except under the impulse to body forth a vision of the love and light and life which was the spirit of the power he worshipped. This persistent upward striving, this earnestness, this passionate intensity, this piety of soul and purity of inspiration, give a quite unique spirituality to his poems. But it cannot be expected that the colder perfections of academic art should be always found in them. They have something of the waywardness and negligence of nature, something of the *asymmetreia* we admire in the earlier creations of Greek architecture. That Shelley, acute critic and profound student as he was, could conform himself to rule and show himself an artist in the stricter sense, is, however, abundantly proved by *The Cenci* and by *Adonais*. The reasons why he did not always observe this method will be understood by those who have studied his *Defence of Poetry*, and learned to sympathize with his impassioned theory of art......

Shelley in his lifetime bound those who knew him with a chain of loyal affection, impressing observers so essentially different as Hogg, Byron, Peacock, Leigh Hunt, Trelawney, Medwin, Williams, with the conviction that he was the gentlest, purest, bravest, and most spiritual being they had ever met. The same conviction

is forced upon his biographer. During his four last years this most loveable of men was becoming gradually riper, wiser, truer to his highest instincts. The imperfections of his youth were being rapidly absorbed. His self-knowledge was expanding, his character mellowing, and his genius growing daily stronger. Without losing the fire that burned in him, he had been lessoned by experience into tempering its fervour; and when he reached the age of twenty-nine, he stood upon the height of his most glorious achievement, ready to unfold his wings for a yet sublimer flight. At that moment, when life at last seemed about to offer him rest, unimpeded activity, and happiness, death robbed the world of his maturity. Posterity has but the product of his cruder years, the assurance that he had already outlived them into something nobler, and the tragedy of his untimely end.

[*From Shaw's "English Literature."*]

Shelley was all his life, both as a poet and as a man, a dreamer, a visionary: his mind was filled with glorious but unreal phantoms of the possible perfectibility of mankind. So ardent was his sympathy with his kind, and so intense his abhorrence of the corruption and suffering he saw around him, that the very intensity of that sympathy clouded his reason; and he fell into the common error of all enthusiasts, of supposing, that if the present organisation of society were swept away, a millennium of virtue and happiness must ensue. He traced the misery and degradation of mankind to the institutions of religion, of government, and of marriage, and not to those passions which these institutions are intended, however imperfectly, to restrain. As a poet he was undoubtedly gifted with genius of a very high order, an immense, though somewhat vaporous richness and ferti-

lity of imagination, an intense fire and energy in the reproduction of what he conceived, and a command over all the resources of metrical harmony such as no English poet has surpassed. He began to write almost from his childhood, and his first attempts were tales in prose which have not been preserved. His poetical career commences with *Queen Mab*, a wild phantasmagoria of beautiful description and fervent declamation, written in that irregular unrhymed versification of which Southey's *Thalaba* is an example The defect of this poem, as indeed of many of Shelleys other compositions, is a vagueness of meaning which often becomes absolutely unintelligible. Lovely, ideal, but cloudy images are continually evoked, but they flit before us like the shadow of a dream........

By a singular anomaly or contrast, Shelley, whose mind was so filled with images of superhuman grace and beauty, exhibits occasionally a morbid tendency to dwell on ideas of a hideous and repulsive character. Like the ocean, his genius, so pure, transparent, and sublime, the parent of so many forms of strange and fairy loveliness, hides within its abysses monstrous and horrible shapes at which imagination recoils. His mode of writing is full of pictures, but the images subsidiary to or illustrative of the principal thought, are often made more prominent than the thought they are intended to enforce Nay, he very frequently goes farther, and makes the antitype and the type change places; the illustrative image becoming the principal object, and thus destroying the due subordination of the ornament to the edifice it is intended to decorate. Shakespeare's miraculous imagination, it is true, seems sometimes almost to run away with him; but when closely studied it will be found that he never fails to keep his principal idea always above and

distinct from even his wildest outbursts of fancy, and ever remains master of his thought

[*From Chambers's Encylopædia.*]

In Shelley's opinions, religious, social, and political, crude as they often were, and everywhere expressed with an unwise reckless vehemence, there was much that might reasonably offend; and they not only on their own account roused against him a storm of obloquy, but made him throughout life the accredited mark of the most foul and malicious slanders. To this chiefly it is to be attributed that whilst he lived, his genius met with no wide appreciation; but since, it has been amply recognised, and perhaps no writer of his time at this day ranks higher on the whole than he. In sustained lyrical impetuosity, Shelley surpasses every other writer; his diction is not more remarkable for its opulence than for the expressive subtlety and precision with which it defines the nicest refinements of feeling and thought; and his page flashes with imagery like a royal robe rich with gems. But too often, whilst he dazzles, he also bewilders; he is fond of supersubtle abstractions, unsubstantial as clouds or dreams; and frequently in reading him we seem merely to be looking on wreaths of rainbow-coloured mist. This want of clear and firm outlines is more or less felt throughout all his larger works, with the single exception of *The Cenci*, in which a terrible story of real life is dramatised with consummate vigour and directness of treatment. As to the matter of the rest of his poems, they concern themselves for the most part, not with the world as it is or has been, but with a perfected world which is to be. Shelley is the *vates* of the future, as Scott is the poet of the past. Of the charge of theism against Shelley it is enough to say that it rests mainly on his boyish poem of *Queen Mab*;

that this he did not himself give to the world; and that when, in 1821, it was surreptitiously published, he issued an express protest against his being held answerable for any opinions set forth in it. In his later works a vague pantheism seems indicated; and one or two passages occur which fairly admit of a purely theistic interpretation.

[*From Hutton's "Literary Essays."*]

Shelley was a poetical mystic, but a poetical mystic of a very unique kind. Usually the word denotes a tendency to bore deep into the world of Divine Infinitude, a disposition to prostrate the mind before the Eternal Will, and to bring the mysteries of faith close to the simplest acts of daily life. This is not only the common tendency of the religious mystics, but it was the characteriste of some of Shelley's own contemporaries: in philosophy, of Coleridge; in poetry, of Wordsworth. In this sense, however, mysticism is usually the characteristic of a mature, not of a youthful mind and Shelley's poetical mysticism is,—in the quick throb of its pulses, in the flush and glow of its hectic beauty, in the thrill of its exquisite anguish, and equally exquisite delirium of imagined bliss,—essentially and to the last the mysticism of intellectual youth. His poetry is the poetry of desire. He is ever the *Homo desideriorum*;—always thirsting, always yearning; never pouring forth the strains of a thankful satisfaction, but either the cravings of an expectant rapture, or the agony of a severed nerve. This is the great distinction which separates him from the other poetical mystics of his day. Wordsworth, for instance, is always exulting in the fulness of Nature; Shelley always chasing its falling stars. Wordsworth gratefully pierces the homely crust of earth to find the rich fountains of life in the Eternal Mind; Shelley follows

with wistful eye the fleeting stream of beauty as it for ever escapes him into the illimitable void........

The same extraordinary contrast comes out in two of the most beautiful poems which our language contains, —Shelley's "Skylark" and Wordsworth's "Skylark." Shelley's "Skylark" is a symbol of illimitable thirst drinking in illimitable sweetness,—an image of that rapture which no man can ever reach, because it soars so far from earth, because it is ever rising with unflagging wing, despising old delights. Shelley will not recognise its earthly form or abode at all; it is not a bird whose nest is on the ground; it is a winged desire, always rising, aspiring, singing, "like an unbodied joy, whose race is just begun":—

"Hail to thee, blithe spirit,
Bird thou never wert,
That from Heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

"Higher still, and higher,
From the earth thou springest;
Like a cloud of fire
The blue deep thou wingest
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

"In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are bright'ning
Thou dost float and run,
Like an unbodied joy, whose race is just begun."*

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* Mr. Rossetti, in his edition, adopts Professor Craik's amendment of "embodied" for "unbodied joy." It seems to me a most unauthentic change. Shelley intended to suggest that the skylark represented in its fire and music the upward flight of a joy that had just got rid of the fetters of a body.

Yet even this symbol of a thirst ever new, and ever seeking to be slaked from sweeter fountains, throws him into utter dejection before this most marvellous of English lyrics closes :—

"We look before and after,
 And pine for what is not;
Our sincerest laughter
 With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
 Hate and pride and fear,
If we were things born
 Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever could come near."

How strong is the contrast with Wordsworth's "Skylark"! Shelley's is far the more wonderful poem, for the quick pulses of his panting measure seem to give us the very beats of those quivering wings, while Wordsworth's stately lines are obviously the expression of the thoughts of a meditative watcher. But while Shelley has ignored the earth and the real bird altogether in his ideal flight; the firm grasp of Wordsworth's thought gives the green earth her due share in the "ethereal ministrel's" rapture, and bids us observe, that it is not the distance from earth, but the nearness to it, which inspires the celestial joy :—

"To the last point of vision and beyond
Soar, daring warbler; thy love-prompted strain,
'Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond,
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain.
Else might'st thou seem—proud privilege—to sing
All independent of the leafy spring."

It was Wordsworth's lifelong faith that fidelity to the "kindred points of heaven and home" made both earth the more joyous, and heaven the more sublime. Shelley's

was a different creed, the creed of longing and of loss, which sought to spring from earth and to create its own heaven,—an enterprise in which it is not easy to succeed.

Shelley, then, was essentially the poet of intellectual desire not of all emotion. The thrill of some fugitive feeling, which he is either vainly pursuing, or which has just slipped through his faint intellectual grasp, gives the key-note to every one of his finest poems...........

If we look at any of the lyrics on which he has set the full stamp of his genius, we find that it images one of these two attitudes of intellect,—the keen exquisite sense of want, gazing wildly forward, or wildly backward, but vainly striving to close on something which eludes its grasp:—

> "The desire of the moth for the star,
> Of the night for the morrow,
> The devotion to something afar
> From the sphere of our sorrow,"

—that is the true burden of every song. Sometimes the gaze is fixed on the future, and sometimes on the past; sometimes it is,

> "Swiftly walk o'er the western wave,
> Spirit of might!
> Out of the misty eastern cave,
> Where all the long and lone daylight
> Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
> Which make the terrible and dear,—
> Swift be thy flight!"

and sometimes,

> "When the lamp is shattered,
> The light in the dust lies dead;
> When the cloud is scattered,
> The rainbow's glory is shed;

"When the lute is broken,
Sweet tones are remembered not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot;"

but whether forward or backward gazing, the attitude of unsatisfied desire is always the same, distinguishing Shelley from the many great contemporaries who, like Goethe himself, for instance,—except in *Faust*, where he had set himself to delineate the pangs of an insatiable heart and intellect,—sing out of the wealth of happy possession even more melodiously than out of the gnawing ardour of desire.........

He is the poet, not of human yearning in general, but of the yearning for that youthful ecstasy which bounds like fresh life through every nerve. He cannot be satisfied without a *thrill* of his whole soul. He knows nothing of serene joy. He thinks the whole universe should be ever thrilling in every fibre with mysterious tenderness.

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It is this constant longing to have ever sweet pulsations of feeling coursing through a transparent organism of life and nature which constitutes the "lyrical cry," as Mr. Arnold has so admirably termed the distinguishing note of lyrical poetry in Shelley's poems. Sometimes, after a long strain on the nerves of intellectual desire, the cry rises almost to a shriek, as, for instance, in the closing lines of "Epipsychidion":—

"Woe is me!
The winged words on which my soul would pierce
Into the height of love's rare Universe,
Are chains of lead around its flight of fire;
I pant, I sink, I tremble, I expire!"

And his most characteristic poem, "Alastor," is a mere picture of a mind pierced with sweet susceptibilities, rushing in mad pursuit of some empty vision of the night, that has set those susceptibilities throbbing with liquid fire.......

Other lyrical poets write of what they feel, but Shelley almost uniformly of what he *wants* to feel. The source of his idealism and mysticism lies in this constant protest against the manifold dross of an opaque existence, through the thick film of which he could not discern—nay, could not well imagine that he discerned—any sweet fountains of warm life.....

There were many of his contemporaries whose poetry had infinitely more in it of mere stimulant than Shelley's; for the excitement he craved was of a highly distilled intellectual kind, a stimulant for the finest sensibilities—never for the mere senses. What he loves to feel is a new quiver through his soul,—a quiver of delicious flame, if it may be, but a shiver of horror, if it may not. The high treble key of Shelley's poetry is sometimes a cry of yearning; but sometimes also a cry of ghastly dread at a spectre raised by himself. His early poems especially are full of "wormy" horrors; and the loathsomeness of the incident on which the plot of *The Cenci* turns, evidently had a dreadful fascination for him...........

And there is not one of his longer poems in which he does not alternate the breathless upward flight of his own skylark with occasional plunges into a weird world of morbid horrors. He has described to us, in his hymn to Intellectual Beauty, how intimately connected in his mind was the first thrill of his adoration for the universal

Beauty with these moods of startled and fascinated dread :—

"While yet a boy, I sought for ghosts, and sped
Through many a listening chamber, cave, and ruin,
And Starlight wood, with fearful steps pursuing
Hopes of high talk with the departed dead.
I called on poisonous names with which our youth is fed :
I was not heard, I saw them not ;
When musing deeply on the lot
Of life at that sweet time when winds are wooing
All vital things that wake to bring
News of buds and blossoming,
Sudden thy shadow fell on me ;
I shrieked, and clasped my hands in ecstasy !

"I vowed that I would dedicate my powers
To thee and thine ; have I not kept the vow ?
With beating heart and streaming eyes even now
I call the phantoms of a thousand hours
Each from h is voiceless grave : they have, in visioned bowers
Of studious zeal or love's delight,
Outwatched with me the envious night :
They know that never joy illumed my brow
Unlinked with hope that thou would'st free
This world from its dark slavery,
That thou, O awful Loveliness,
Would'st give whate'er those words cannot express."

"Awful Loveliness" Shelley calls this object of his adoration ; and there is, I suppose, no doubt that he ascribed significance to the term, but certainly not of the significance which most men assign to it ; he did not mean to refer to that bending of the humiliated spirit before a holy Power from whom it craves much, from whom it can compel nothing, that expresses to most of us the essence of "awe." The loveliness which he called "awful" was one which he hoped to uncover and take by storm, the

awe only whetting the force of his desire—not a personal power, but a half-veiled source of anticipated rapture. Profound awelessness, indeed, characterises all Shelley's poetry, on subjects both of human and of divine mystery.

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Shelley's awelessness—"curiosity," as Hazlitt calls it—is only the result of the limitless longing with which he seeks to tear the veil from almost any secret, human or divine; and yet not in the spirit of a thirst for new *truth* so much as a thirst for a new effervescence of a nature half-way between knowledge and feeling. This characteristic in Shelley is an exceedingly different thing from that species of scoffing wit in which Byron attained such pre-eminence, and which consists in insolent daring displayed wantonly before the face of a mysterious or sacred Power, without ever caring to penetrate the secret of the mystery. Shelley's intellect was far subtler than Byron's, and betrayed no fascination for mere acts of intellectual impertinence. Byron was a grown up schoolboy, with a keen pleasure in playing practical jokes on mighty Powers in which he half believed. Shelley crept up to them with an irresistible longing to peep under the veil, and feel a new thrill vibrate through his own nature. Still, as I said, his temptation was not towards scoffing, but towards a morbid subtlety of imagination on unhealthy subjects; and the irreverence fostered in the external relations of his life through the unhappy peculiarities of a coarse and obstinate father, and the petty sarcastic egotism of his most intimate friend, cannot but have had an evil influence in dissolving the spell of that inward awe which arrests the curious imagination on the verge of subjects upon which it is not good for us to dwell..........

Shelley never shows his full power in dealing separately with intellectual or moral or physical beauty. His appropriate sphere was what I may call swift sensibility, the intersecting line between the sensuous and the intellectual or moral. Mere sensation is too literal for him, mere feeling too blind and dumb, mere thought too cold; but in the line where sensation and feeling are just passing into thought, where the stream of desire receives a new poignancy from the chill current of subtle discrimination with which his mind penetrated it, his great power lay............

Shelley's mind was heated through at a much lower comparative temperature, if I may be allowed the image, than almost any other English poet's. I would not say, as Mr. Emerson has said of some minor poet, that the susceptibility of his imagination illustrated the proverb "little pot, soon hot"; for Shelley stands in the very front rank of English poets. But still there was something of tenuity in the essence of his genius, which is clearly connected with this liability to rapid excitation. I would rather say that his genius resembles the water taken to a mountain top, and which, under that attenuated atmospheric pressure, boils with far less heat—or in his case what *seems* to general observers far less heat—than other men's. Under the influence of a sentiment which would at most warm the surface of other poets' minds into a genial glow, Shelley's bubbles up from its very depths, in a sort of pale passion, and seethes with imprisoned thought. This alone produces a mystifying effect on ordinary minds. To be aware that Shelley breathes an exceedingly rarefied atmosphere of abstract sentiment, and yet to see this rarefied air intoxicating his imagination till his pulses bound as if under the spell

of an ardent passion, is like hearing a flow of hot thought from the lips of a spectre, or seeing the bloodless ichor coursing furiously through its veins. There is something necessarily mystifying in this. The sentiment is half abstract; yet the ardour is unparalleled even in the most eager pursuits of human passion; and the crowd of impressions and images which rush in so thickly, merely to amplify an apparently thin, if not unreal, sentiment, are dizzying to any reader at the first onset.........

Shelley's mind was not powerfully excited either by the merely spiritual or by the merely physical world, either by the supernatural or by the natural, but by an ideal zone peculiar to himself, where the uninteresting part, as he thought it, of reality was purged away, and the solemn mystery of unseen power was not yet reached. His imagination does not seem to have been strong enough to weld together the invisible and visible, the spiritual causes and the earthly phenomena, into a single imaginative whole. "Lift not the painted veil," he said, "which those who live call life," even "though unreal shapes be pictured there." He had tried to lift it, and it only made him lose his hold of life, without gaining any hold of unseen realities. And this suggests the true sphere of his genius. He recoiled from the world of living reality; he had not penetrated to the world of unseen strength; his imagination remained suspended between the two, wielding a wonderful power over ideal essences, but neither giving him a strong hold on life nor reaching their root in God. His intellect, subtle as it was, had no vigorous grasp in it; or, if I may use a somewhat pedantic expression, it had no integrating power. It was swift, and infinite in fertility; but the only string by which he ever bound his thoughts

firmly together was continuity of desire. There was but the faintest measure of binding strength in his thought, the faintest possible volition in it, Hence hs had no enjoyment at all in reality as such. There never was a poet who had less sympathy with the pre-Raphaelite school of art. Poets, and artists, and thinkers, and politicians, and theologians, who hunger after reality, hold, we suppose, that the actual combination of qualities and substances and personal influences, as God has made them, contains something much better worth knowing and imagining accurately, than any recast they could effect of their own. They believe in the infinite significance of actual ties. And those who feel this, as all realists do usually feel it, must cherish a certain spirit of faithful tenacity at the bottom of their minds, a respect for the mere fact of existence, a wish to see good reason before they separate things joined together by nature and, perhaps, they will think, by divine law; a disposition to cling to the details of experience, as having at least a presumptive sacredness; nay, they feel even a higher love for such beauty as is presented to them in the real universe, than for any which is got by the dissolving and recomposing power of their own eclectic idealism.

Shelley shows no trace of this feeling. He is idealist to the heart's core. The root of much of the sort of feeling I have described is fidelity of temperament, and Shelley had but very little of this; he did not instinctively cling to things or persons as he had seen and known them, simply because he had so seen and known them. Again, a good deal more of the same feeling is due to a spiritual preference for that goodness which has penetrated us and conquered our resistance, as compared with the natural beauty which has shone upon us, but has

exerted no such moulding power. Shelley had no such preference. He held that all beauty should sink into our being directly as the dew sinks into the thirsty soil; and his aspiration was to refine away the coarse material of earth until the magic worked without hindrance. His adoration is all for the ease and richness and warmth of overflowing, passionate, lavish beauty......

Further again, as I have already said, Shelley's intellect and imagination were not of a sort to master a complex whole. There was no *grip* in them. Infinitely subtle they were; and if they had had more volition, they might perhaps have been less subtle; but of volition they were almost destitute. His imagination was of one dimension only,—a point of moving fire generating myriads of beautiful shapes, but never illuminating anything beyond the single series of connected positions which the spark traversed between the moment of kindling and the moment of extinction. Hence the far greater perfection of his shorter lyrics, and the superiority of *The Cenci*, which is constituted by one single thrill of preternatural horror, to any other of his longer poems. He never holds up either a subject or a character steadily before his mind to examine it in all its parts; even *The Cenci* is a passion, not a drama,—the silver gleam of a winter torrent down a terrific precipice, leaving a shudder behind, and no more.

Thus Shelley's intellectual, moral, and emotional nature alike made him a pure idealist. There was no moulding, no subduing, no conquering element in the beauty he worshipped. It conquered by fascination alone, not by any power of character. There was no inherent strength in his conception of beauty. He *abstracted* it from the world, instead of impressing or imposing it on the world. His intellect had no grappling-

irons wherewith to cling to the existing order of things till he had exhausted its possibilities; his conscience showed the finest feminine qualities of disinterestedness and even fortitude, but recoiled abruptly from all aggressive exploits against the coarse jumbled evils of the world; his affections were not dumb conservative things which fastened on the forms consecrated by time and usage, but swift gleams of chameleon-like rapture.........

The characteristics, then, of Shelley's poetical mysticism seem to me to be the spirit of unsatisfied desire which kindles it, the intellectualised character of that desire, impregnated as it is everywhere with the fixed air of subtle thought, and yet never dominated or controlled by that thought,—a consequent awelessness of instinct, which rushes on its way with a craving whetted by the desultory stirrings of hungry intellect into the curiosity of passion,—an eclectic idealism which recoils from everything unattractive,—a love of beauty, which excludes the attribute of strength, and includes only passive virtues,—all culminating in the subsitution of either Time or Nothingness in the place of the power of God. I do not think that Shelley's genius, trained as it was, could have taken any other path of development. He received in his earliest days the severest shock of repulsion from the world as it was. His whole nature led him to the elaboration of ideal beauties. There was something of his own "Sensitive Plant" in his mind, which made him start away from repulsive qualities, and rendered him incapable of reconciling contradictions, or holding together with a strong hand the various elements of a complex problem. Into one side of human perfection he had a far higher insight than most men of his day,—the passive nobility of beautiful instinct and endurance. But

the very idealising tendency which repelled him from human politics, repelled him also from all human creeds, and the very first objection he took to them was to their demand of deference for a spiritual King. From all arbitrary authority he recoiled, and never apparently conceived the possibility of *authority* properly so called, and yet not arbitrary. Hence, to save his faith in human nature, he was almost compelled to seat a shadow on the throne of the Universe. The only marvel is, that his imagination still kept a throne of the Universe at all, even for a shadow. His ideal world was one "where music and moonlight and feeling are one," and in such a world apparently no throne or sceptre would be needed. The result of his idealism, as of all such idealism, was, that he nowhere found any true rest for his spirit, since he never came upon any free and immutable will on which to lean. The sense of weakness, of a longing to lean somewhere, without recognising any strength on which to lean, runs through his whole poems :—

> "Yet now despair itself is mild
> Even as the winds and waters are ;
> I could lie down like a tired child,
> And weep away the life of care
> Which I have borne, and yet must bear,"

is a burden that reappears habitually in his poetry. There is but one passage in all Shelley's exquisite poetry which rises into pure sublimity,—because power is of the essence of sublimity, and Shelley had no true sense of power. But one does, and that is, characteristically enough, the passage in which he puts into Beatrice Cenci's heart the sudden doubt lest the spiritual world be without God after all :—

> "Sweet Heaven forgive weak thoughts! If there should be
> No God, no Heaven, no Earth, in the void world,—
> The wide, gray, lampless, deep, unpeopled world!"

A sublimer line was scarcely ever written. It casts just a gleam on the infinite horror of an empty eternity, and then drops the veil again, leaving the infinitude of weakness and emptiness intensified into a sublimity. Yet here is the true root of Shelley's restlessness—the suspicion that when desire fails, the object of the heart's desire may fail with it,—that "the One" who "remains" is a thinner, fainter, less living thing than the "many" which "change and pass,"—that there is nothing substantial at the heart of the universe,—no Will behind the fleeting beauty, no strength of self-sacrifice behind the melting love. Shelley was no Atheist. His Pantheism was sincere, and at times no doubt a kind of faith to him; but belief in a universal essence gave no solidity to the order of the world, no firm law to the flux and reflux of human desire, had no power to accept the command, "Be still, and know that I am God." Behind this "form and flush of the universal beauty" there always lay a dreadful phantom of possible emptiness. He felt of pantheistic hopes as he felt of the pictured falsehoods on the surface of the individual mind, that they might be all illusory scenic effects. "Lift not the painted veil which those who live call life." What if we were to find even behind the fresco of universal loveliness nothing but a "wide, gray, lampless, deep, unpeopled world"?

[*From Roden Noel's "Essays on Poetry and Poets."*]

Shelley has been termed the most poetical of poets, and with some reason. He more seldom probably than any poet, except Shakespeare, lapses into prose. A

living, original poetic diction seems to flow perennially from him; metaphor and imagery never fail him, his ear for melody and harmony of measure, not too obtrusive and artificial, but spontaneous, varied, and charming, was unsurpassed; he is one of the great modern brotherhood of prophets, or interpreters of Nature; and the substance of his message to us as seer concerning truth and life is of high value, whatever may be its error and limitation.

* * * *

But yet we have to note something on the other side, that may be justly urged against Shelley as poet. His perennial affluence of imagery, metaphor, beautiful phrase, and lovely rhythm, sometimes, prevails to the injury of his substance, which is in danger of vanishing in a mere spray of verbal effects. His meaning is apt to be beaten out very thin. A peculiarity in him is that, whereas his power of interpreting, and making us feel the life in Nature—often through personifications—is so remarkable (as in "The Cloud," the "Ode to the West Wind," and the "Hymn to Pan,") he sometimes endeavours to give a semblance of independent vitality to abstractions, which do not lend themselves readily to such endeavour. Thus, greatly as I admire "Adonais," the elegy on the death of Keats, I do think there is a certain frigidity and unreality in parts; I will not say a want of sincerity, because there is an atmosphere of true poetry in the very subtlest and most impalpable of the Shelleyan abstractions. He breathed in rare atmospheres, where none but himself could breathe; he delighted in disporting himself in a region between heaven and earth, in what occultism terms the *astral* region, or ether, among the phantasmal shadows, or more refined volatilizations of mundane solidities. At such times, as in

"The Witch of Atlas" (which is an exquisite iridescence of the fancy, and no more), he did not penetrate to the heart of things, but played, as it were, with the ghosts or wraiths of them only; more beautiful, indeed, or as beautiful as any earthly appearance to sense, but not more spirit-sustaining or substantial. He dwells often in some nebulous region of rainbows, which corresponds not to the laws of Nature as known by sense, or understanding; nor to the deeper spiritual laws in which these have their being. Thus when he sings of Dawn—

> "On the brink of the night and the morning
> My coursers are wont to respire;
> But the earth has just whispered a warning
> That their flight must be swifter than fire"—

this seems a mere gambol of fantasy, not true to the actual fact, and not suggesting anything more essential than the outward fact. In "Adonais" I thing most of us refuse to realize the personification of the Dreams and Splendours, winged Persuations and veiled Destinies. Desires and Adorations adopted from Bion, but which, with the Sicilian poet, were pretty, and very conceivable Cupids. Compare and contrast Wordsworth's wonderfully imaginative personifications in the "Yew Trees," that solemnize and subdue the soul.

But then to Shelley thoughts easily took palpable form, got themselves incarnated in some concrete image, more or less distinct, and thus he leaves his readers behind. He *saw* his thoughts. And, indeed, if we would pierce to the reality, we must remain in, or rather return to, the concrete, for that alone is real. It is a lovely realm of fairy, all-harmonious in itself, that the poet bodies forth. But the stanzas about Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Echo lamenting Adonais, seem almost ex-

travagant in their sentiment however beautiful. Only it was rather the ideal poet that Shelley was thinking of: Keats had become one with him. What lover of poetry has not wandered spell-bound in the lush bowers of "Prometheus," all woven of luxuriant trailers, and flushed over with rarest bloom? Most exquisite inventions of Paradisal loveliness! Think of the childlike spirit of the Earth asleep, in the light of his own smiles, and pillowed on his alabaster arms! The martyrdom of the demi-god, Prometheus, benefactor of man, is the noble central motive, but it is overgrown with entangled episode, imagery, and musical song. The poetry of Shelley wanders away at its own sweet will; there is an absence of concentrating, architectonic, moulding power, giving unity; although we find, generally, unity of mood, and lyrical feeling. The poet fades away down every lovely avenue of fresh suggestion opened out to him by his position of the moment. And so we are affected with a drying excess of sweetness and profusion. But "*tell me where the senses mix*," sings Tennyson. Shelley can. His metaphors, his epithets and similitudes, make you feel their essential kinship and unity; how they melt into and blend with one another, like odours of many flowers in the still garden of the soul. But in such odes as the "Ode to Liberty," I do think there is no little confusion of imagery, and substitution of sounding words for definite thought, or representations, an error so fatally reproduced and intensified in some of the poet's disciples. Even the music is not always present. But what faults are not atoned for by such beauties as those in the utterances of Panthea?.......

Shelley saw trance-visions with shut eyes; they are ideal landscapes that he mostly paints us, hardly the

landscapes of earth; these he beheld with inward eye, as he saw the vision of the child in the bay of Lerici, when his outward eye was open the child, who may have been his own little William, beckoning him from the sea; and shortly after, we know how his beloved friend, the sea, received him into her bosom. But in the pageantry of sky and cloud and sea and forest and flowers he is at home, in these he reveals the very Turner of poetry. "The Sensitive Plant" reveals the essential soul of flowers. All the feminine sensitiveness of the poet, his gentleness, his almost irresponsible *naivete* of incontrollably childlike impulse, made him feel with the pure, cool, passive, meek-blooded world of flowers, as with the world of infancy and animal life. Well did he call himself Ariel. He was a kind of elf, but semi-human—an Æolian lyre, breathed upon by every wandering Wind, and yielding sweetest melody. As an instance at once of his strong, clangorous, inspiring verbal music, so germane to the song of glorious aspiration for humanity that lifts him, and of many other excellences too, I need refer only to the chorus from "Hellas," where note especially the fine phrase, "fed with morning," applied to the eagle......................

He loves the sublime, grandiose, vague; but in depicting clouds, and wood, and sky, and flower, he was exquisitely minute, and true to fact. The noble lines written among the Euganean Hills are too long to quote; but these, as also "Julian and Maddalo," contain great pictures of sunset. The brief lyrics, which after all are perhaps the most inestimable of Shelley's gifts to us, merely as poetry, for perfection of form and exquisite feeling, express for the most part indefinable unsatisfied longing, inconsolable regret, tender but poignant sorrow for the transitoriness

of earthly things, beauty, love, and all delight; also an oppressive sense of the perversity and hard-heartedness of men. They are as the low outweeping of a heart overweighted with the misery of the world. The delicate evanescent grace of them is like nothing else in literature.

* * * *

Shelley is an idealist in philosophy. The world is a phantasmagoria of impressions and ideas, belonging to the soul, or spirit; and love, or ideal Beauty, the essential nature of that spirit, the pervading principle of the universe. But all is one, and diversity, variety, are but passing manifestations of that One. This, briefly and meagrely, is the idea that runs through the poetry. He deifies impulse, instinct, and resents constraint or law imposed *ab extra* by the State, or even by conscience within. He would urge that the law of Love is the highest law; yet it is pretty well impossible in our present condition to merge the sense of Duty altogether in that, though in the ideal and future existence even the sense of Duty may be transcended. But swift transition was the keynote of Shelley's impressionable nature, and it has been truly said that he thirsted for rapture, highly-strung enjoyment, the only condition of which is change. So no one laments the fading of our joys more pathetically. On the whole, Shelley was, and is, our most inspired and possessed poet, the most spontaneous and demoniac—best example of that madness which Plato ascribes to the true bard. He is carried out of himself indeed, and reflects the world; yet his is an intense and rich personality; it is in one very distinct personality that the world is thus reflected; the poet is full of elaborate self-pourtrayals, though idealised, and therefore representative. Yet I think he had not strength and grip enough, condensation

and fusion enough, to make him grasp the idea of will, of personality, of individual identity, nor does he make us feel it. That is to me the defect of his idealism ; for ideas and phenomena can only be in thinking persons of given character ; and that leaves him the poet of some delicious thrill or shimmer of ever-varying impressions or appearances, as also of impermanence and inconstancy.

[*From Arnold's History of English Literature.*]

Shelley embraced with fervour, even from his schoolboy days, both the destructive and the constructive ideas of the revolutionary school. He was enthusiastically convined that the great majority of mankind was, and with trifling exceptions had always been, enslaved by custom, by low material thoughts, by tyranny, and by superstition, and he no less fervently believed in the perfectibility of the individual and of society, as the result of the bursting of these bonds, and of a philosophical and philanthropic system of education. Among other restraints, he spurned at first even those of rhyme; the lyrical portions of *Queen Mab*, his earliest poem, are so many wild lawless bursts of rushing verse, with a certain resemblance to the choruses of Æschylus. *The Revolt of Islam*, an ideal picture of the struggle maintained by an awakened people against the beliefs and institutions that it had previously held sacred, but which in the heated fancy of the poet appeared as the causes of all its misery, was published in 1817. It is in twelve cantos, the metre being the Spenserian stanza. To a mind like Shelley's it may be conceived how great was the attraction of the story of Prometheus, the great Titan who rebelled against the gods To this attraction we owe the drama of *Prometheus Unbound*. His tragedy of

The Cenci, written at Rome in 1820, shows great dramatic power, but the nature of the story renders it impossible that it should be represented on the stage. The lyrical drama of *Hellas*, written in 1821, was suggested by the efforts which the insurgent Greeks were then making to shake off the yoke of their Turkish tyrants. Shelley regarded with extreme indignation the conversion of Wordsworth to conservative sentiments, and he gave vent to his feelings by writing the satire of *Peter Bell the Third*. Among his shorter poems may be specified—*The Sensitive Plant*, the lovely ethereal lyric *To a Skylark*, *The Cloud*, *Stanzas written in dejection near Naples*, and *Epipsychidion*. This wonderfully gifted man was suddenly snatched from existence in July 1822, being drowned by the upsetting of his boat in the Gulf of Spezzia.

[*From Bagehot's "Literary Studies."*]

No character except his own, and characters most strictly allied to his own, are delineated in his works. The tendency of his mind was rather to personify isolated qualities or impulses—equality, liberty, revenge, and so on—than to create out of separate parts or passions the single conception of an entire character. This is, properly speaking, the mythological tendency. All early nations show this marked disposition to conceive of separate forces and qualities as a kind of semi-persons; that is, not true actual persons with distinct characters, but beings who guide certain influences, and of whom all we know is that they guide those influenees. Shelley evinces a remarkable tendency to deal with mythology in this simple and elementary form. Other poets have breathed into mythology a modern life; have been attracted by those parts which seem to have a religious

meaning, and have enlarged that meaning while studying to embody it. With Shelley it is otherwise; the parts of mythology by which he is attracted are the bare parts—the simple stories which Dr. Johnson found so tedious:—

'Arethusa arose
From her couch of snows
In the Acroceraunian mountains.
From cloud and from crag,
With many jag,
Shepherding her bright fountains,
She leapt down the rocks
With her rainbow locks.
Streaming among the streams;
Her steps paved with green
The downard ravine,
Which slopes to the western gleams;
And gliding and springing,
She went ever singing,
In murmurs as soft as sleep;
The earth seemed to love her,
And heaven smiled above her,
As she lingered towards the deep.
Then Alpheus bold,
On his glacier cold,
With his trident the mountains strook,'
&c., &c., &c.

Arethusa and Alpheus are not characters: they are only the spirits of the fountain and the stream. When not writing on topics connected with ancient mythology, Shelley shows the same bent. 'The Cloud,' and the 'Skylark,' are more like mythology—have more of the impulse by which the populace, if we may so say, of the external world was first fancied into existence—than any other modern poems. There is, indeed, no habit of mind

more remote from our solid and matter-of-fact existence; none which was once powerful, of which the present traces are so rare. In truth, Shelley's imagination achieved all it could with the materials before it. The materials for the creative faculty must be provided by the receptive faculty. Before a man can imagine what will seem to be realities, he must be familiar with what are realities. The memory of Shelley had no heaped-up 'store of life,' no vast accumulation of familiar characters. His intellect did not tend to the stong grasp of realities; its taste was rather for the subtle refining of theories, the distilling of exquisite abstractions. His imagination personified what his understanding presented to it. It had nothing else to do. He displayed the same tendency of mind—sometimes negatively and sometimes positively—in his professedly religious inquiries. His belief went through three stages—first Materialism, then a sort of Nihilism, then a sort of Platonism. In neither of them is the rule of the universe ascribed to a character; in the first and last it is ascribed to animated abstractions; in the second there is no universe at all. In neither of them is there any strong grasp of fact. The writings of the first period are clearly influenced by, and modelled on, Lucretius. He held the same abstract theory of nature—sometimes of half-personified atoms, moving hither and thither of themselves—at other times of a general pervading spirit of nature, holding the same relation to nature, as a visible object, that Arethusa the goddess bears to Arethusa the stream........And he copied not only the opinions of Lucretius, but also his tone. Nothing is more remarkable than that two poets of the first rank should have felt a bounding joy in the possession of opinions which, if true, ought, one would think,

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to move an excitable nature to the keenest and deepest melancholy. That this life is all; that there is no God, but only atoms and a moulding breath; are singular doctrines to be accepted with joy: they only could have been so accepted by wild minds bursting with imperious energy, knowing of no law, 'wreaking thoughts upon expression' of which they knew neither the meaning nor the result. From this stage Shelley's mind passed to another, but not immediately to one of greater belief. On the contrary, it was the doctrine of Hume which was called in to expel the doctrine of Epicurus. His previous teachers had taught him that there was nothing except matter: the Scotch sceptic met him at that point with the question. Is matter certain? Hume, as is well known, adopted the negative part from the theory of meterialism and the theory of immeterialism, but rejected the positive side of both. He held, or professed to hold, that there was no substantial thing either matter or mind; but only 'sensations and impressions' flying about the universe, inhering in nothing and going nowhere. These, he said, were the only subjects of consciousness; all you felt was your feeling, and all your thought was your thought; the rest was only hypothesis. The notion that there was any '*you*' at all was a theory generally current among mankind, but not, unless proved, to be accepted by the philosopher. The doctrine, though little agreeable to the world in general, has an excellence in the eyes of youthful disputants; it is doctrine which no one will admit, and which no one can disprove. Shelley accordingly accepted it; indeed it was a better description of his universe than of most people's; his mind was filled with a swarm of ideas. fancies, thoughts, streaming on without his volition, without plan or order. He might be pardoned for fancy-

ing that they were all; he could not see the outward world for them; their giddy passage occupied him till he forgot himself. He has put down the theory in its barest form: 'The most refined abstractions of logic conduct to a view of life which, though startling to the apprehension, is in fact, that which the habitual sense of its repeated combinations has extinguished in us. It strips as it were, the painted curtain from this scene of things. I confess that I am one of those who am unable to refuse my assent [? of those who are unable to refuse their assent] to the conclusions of those philosophers who assert that nothing exists but as it is perceived.' And again: 'The view of life presented by the most refined deductions of the intellectual philosophy is that of unity. Nothing exists but as it is perceived. The difference is merely nominal between those two classes of thought which are vulgarly distinguished by the names of ideas and of external objects. Pursuing the same thread of reasoning, the existence of distinct individual minds, similar to that which is employed in now questioning its own nature, is likewise found to be a delusion. The words, *I*, *you*, *they* are not signs of any actual difference subsisting between the assemblage of thoughts thus indicated, but are merely marks employed to denote the different modifications of the one mind. Let it not be supposed that this doctrine conducts to the monstrous presumption that I, the person who now write and think, am that one mind. I am but a portion of it. The words, *I* and *you* and *they*, are grammatical devices invented simply for arrangement, and totally devoid of the intense and exclusive sense usually attached to them. It is difficult to find terms adequate to express so subtle a conception as that to which the intellectual philosophy has conducted us. We are on

that verge where words abandon us; and what wonder if we grow dizzy to look down the dark abyss of how little we know!' On his wild nerves these speculations produced a great effect. Their thin acuteness excited his intellect; their blank result appalled his imagination. He was obliged to pause in the last fragment of one of his metaphysical papers, 'dizzy from thrilling horror.' In this state of mind he began to study Plato; and it is probable that in the whole library of philosophy there is no writer so suitable to such a reader. A common modern author believing in mind and matter, he would have put aside at once as loose and popular. He was attracted by a writer who like himself, in some sense did not believe in either—who supplied him with subtle realities different from either, at once to be extracted by his intellect and to be glorified by his imagination. The theory of Plato, that the all-apparent phenomena were unreal, he believed already; he had a craving to believe in something noble, beautiful, and difficult to understand; he was ready, therefore, to accept the rest of that theory, and to believe that these passing phenomena were imperfect types and resemblances—imperfect incarnations, so to speak—of certain immovable, eternal, archetypal realities. All his later writings are coloured by that theory, though in some passages the remains of the philosophy of the senses with which he commenced appear in odd proximity to the philosophy of abstractions with which he concluded. There is, perhaps, no allusion in Shelley to the *Phædrus*; but no one can doubt which of Plato's ideas would be most attractive to the nature we have described. The most valuable part of Plato he did not comprehend. There is in Shelley none of that unceasing reference to ethical consciousness and ethical religion which

has for centuries placed Plato first among the preparatory preceptors of Christianity. The general doctrine is that

'The one remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light for ever shines, earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of eternity,
Until death tramples it to fragments.'

The particular worship of the poet is paid to that one spirit whose

'plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world compelling there
All new successions to the forms they wear;
Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks its flight
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear;
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts, and men, into the heaven's light.'

It is evident that not even in this, the highest form of creed to which he ever clearly attained, is there any such distinct conception of a character as is essential to a real religion. The conception of God is not to be framed out of a single attribute. Shelley has changed the 'idea' of beauty into a spirit, and this probably for the purposes of poetry; he has given it life and animal motion; but he has done no more; the 'spirit' has no will, and no virtue: it is animated, but unholy; alive, but unmoral: it is an object of intense admiration; it is not an object of worship..........

Lord Macaulay speaks of Shelley as having, more than any other poet, many of the qualities of the great old masters; two of these he has especially. In the first place, his imagination is classical rather than romantic, —we should, perhaps, apologise for using words which have been used so often, but which hardly convey even now a clear and distinct meaning; yet they seem the best

for conveying a distinction of this sort. When we attempt to distinguish the imagination from the fancy, we find that they are often related as a beginning to an ending. On a sudden we do not know how a new image, form, idea, occurs to our minds; sometimes it is borne in upon us with a flash, sometimes we seem unawares to stumble upon it, and find it as if it had long been there: in either case the involuntary, unanticipated appearance of this new thought or image is a primitive fact which we cannot analyse or account for. We say it originated in our imagination or creative faculty: but this is a mere expression of the completeness of our ignorance; we could only define the imagination as the faculty which produces such effects; we know nothing of it or its constitution. Again, on this original idea a large number of accessory and auxiliary ideas seem to grow or accumulate insensibly, casually, and without our intentional effort; the bare primitive form attracts a clothing of delicate materials—an adornment not altering its essences, but enhancing its effect. This we call the work of the fancy. An exquisite delicacy in appropriating fitting accessories is as much the characteristic excellence of a fanciful mind, as the possession of large, simple, bold ideas is of an imaginative one. The last is immediate; the first comes minute by minute. The distinction is like what one fancies between sculpture and painting. If we look at a delicate statue—a Venus or Juno—it does not suggest any slow elaborate process by which its expression was chiselled and its limbs refined; it seems a simple fact; we look, and require no account of it; it exists. The greatest painting suggests, not only a creative act, but a decorative process: day by day there was something new; we could watch the tints laid on, the dresses tinged, the

perspective growing and growing. There is something statuesque about the imagination; there is the gradual complexity of painting in the most exquisite productions of the fancy. When we speak of this distinction, we seem almost to be speaking of the distinction between ancient and modern literature. The characteristics of the classical literature is the simplicity with which the imagination appears in it; that of modern literature is the profusion with which the most various adornments of the accessory fancy are thrown and lavished upon it......

We need only to open Shelley, to show how essentially classical in its highest efforts his art is. Indeed, although nothing can be further removed from the staple topics of the classical writers than the abstract lyric, yet their treatment is nearly essential to it. We have said, its sphere is in what the Germans call the unconditioned—in the unknown, immeasurable, and untrodden. It follows from this that we cannot know much about it. We cannot know detail in tracts we have never visited; the infinite has no form; the immeasurable no outline: that which is common to all worlds is simple. There is therefore no scope for the accessory fancy. With a single soaring effort imagination may reach her end; if she fail, no fancy can help her; if she succeed, there will be no petty accumulations of insensible circumstance in a region far above all things. Shelley's excellence in the abstract lyric is almost another phrase for the simplicity of his impulsive imagination...........

There is an obvious sense in which Shelley is a fanciful, as contradistinguished from an imaginative poet. These words, being invented for the popular expression of differences which can be remarked without narrow inspection, are apt to mislead us when we apply them to the exact

results of a near and critical analysis. Besides the use of the word 'fancy' to denote the power which adorns and amplifies the product of the primitive imagination, we also employ it to denote the weaker exercise of the faculty which itself creates those elementary products. We use the word 'imaginative' only for strong, vast, imposing, interesting conceptions: we use the word 'fanciful' when we have to speak of smaller and weaker creations, which amaze us less at the moment and affect us more slightly afterwards. Of course, metaphysically speaking, it is not likely that there will be found to be any distinction; the faculty which creates the most attractive ideas is doubtless the same as that which creates the less attractive. Common language marks the distinction, because common people are impressed by the contrast between what affects them much and what affects them little; but it is no evidence of the entire difference of the latent agencies. Speech as usual, refers to sensations, and not to occult causes. Of fancies of this sort Shelley is full: whole poems—as the 'Witch of Atlas'—are composed of nothing else. Living a good deal in, and writing a great deal about, the abstract world, it was inevitable that he should often deal in fine subtleties, affecting very little the concrete hearts of real men. Many pages of his are, in consequence, nearly unintelligible, even to good crictics of common poetry. The air is too rarefied for hardy and healthy lungs: these like, as Lord Bacon, expressed it 'to work upon stuff.' From his habitual choice of slight and airy subjects, Shelley may be called a fanciful, as opposed to an imaginative, poet; from his bare delineations of great objects, his keen expression of distinct impulses, he should be termed an imaginative rather than a fanciful one.........

In style, said Mr. Wordsworth—in workmanship, we think his expression was—Shelley is one of the best of us. This too, we think, was the second of the peculiarities to which Lord Macaulay referred when he said that Shelley had, more than any recent poet, some of the qualities of the great old masters. The peculiarity of his style is its intellectuality; and this strikes us the more from its contrast with its impulsiveness. He had something of this in life. Hurried away by sudden desires, as he was in his choice of ends, we are struck with a certain comparative measure and adjustment in his choice of means. So in his writings; over the most intense excitement, the grandest objects, the keenest agony, the most buoyant joy, he throws an air of subtle mind. His language is minutely and acutely searching; at the dizziest of meaning the keeness of the words is greatest. As in mania, so in his description of it, the acuteness of the mind seems to survive the mind itself. It was from Plato and Sophocles, doubtless, that he gained the last perfection in preserving the accuracy of the intellect when treating of the objects of the imagination: but in its essence it was a peculiarity of his own nature. As it was the instinct of Byron to give in glaring words the gross phenomena of evident objects, so it was that of Shelley to refine the most inscrutable with the curious nicety of an attenuating metaphysician. In the wildest of ecstacies his self-anatomising intellect is equal to itself.

[*From Leslie Stephen's "Hours in a Library."*]

Shelley seems to have thought himself as well fitted for abstract speculation as for poetry; and his widow declared that, had he lived longer, he might have 'presented to the world a complete theory of mind; a theory to which Berkeley, Coleridge, and Kant would have contribu-

ted; but more simple, unimpugnable, and entire than the systems of those writers.' The phrase is by itself enough to prove Mrs. Shelley's incompetence to form any opinion as to her husband's qualifications for this stupendous task. It is not by forming a patchwork of Berkeley, Kant, and Coleridge that a 'complete theory of mind' is likely to be evolved; nor does it appear that Shelley really knew much about either of the latter writers; certainly, he has not given the smallest proof of a power of original speculation in such matters. And yet, though it would be absurd to treat Shelley seriously as an originator of philosophic thought or even as a moderately profound student of philosophy, there is no doubt that his poetry contains a philosophical element which deserves consideration, if only to facilitate the comprehension of his poetry.

Enough has been written by the competent and the incompetent, the prosaic and the poetical, the hyperbolical panegyrists and the calm analytical critics, of Shelley considered primarily as a poet. Nobody, as it seems to me, is entitled to add anything who has not himself a very unusual share, if not of Shelley's own peculiar genius, at least of receptivity for its products; and after all that has been written by the ablest writers, one can learn more of Shelley by getting, say, the 'Adonais' or the 'Ode to the Skylark' by heart than by studying volumes of talk about his works. At any rate, I feel no vocation to add to the mass of imperfectly appreciative disquisition. Recent discussions, however, seem to show both that some interest is still taken in the other aspect of Shelley's writings, and that an obvious remark or two still remains to be made. People are in doubt whether to classify Shelley as an atheist, pantheist, or theist;

they dispute as to whether his writings represent the destructive spirit which undermines all that is good amongst men, or, on the contrary, are the fullest expression yet reached by any human being of the divinest element of religion. Were it not that some parallel phenomena might be very easily suggested, it would be surprising that the meaning of a writer, who had extraordinary powers of expressing himself clearly and an almost morbid hatred of anything like reticence, should be seriously doubtful. The explanation of the wonder is not, I think, very far too seek. For one thing, people have not yet made up their minds as to the true bearing of some opinions which Shelley undoubtedly held. The question whether they were of good or evil import is mixed up with the question as to whether they were true or false. Upon that problem I shall not touch; but a few pages may be occupied by an attempt to indicate what, as a matter of fact, Shelley actually held, or rather what was his general attitude as to certain important questions. One result will probably be that it matters very little what he held so far as his influence upon our own conclusions is concerned. For, to say nothing of Shelley's incapacity to deal satisfactorily with the great controversies of his own time, our point of view has so much shifted that we can consider his opinions almost as calmy as those of the Eleatics or the Pythagoreans. They are matters of history which need affect nobody at the present day..........

He attracted, and doubtless because he was attracted by, many who had nothing but contempt for his favourite enthusiasms, and it is still more evident that however wayward was his career in some relations of life, he had a full measure of the young man's capacity for reverence. Dr. Lind seems to have been his earliest idol; but a far

more important connection was that with Godwin. Godwin was in his fifty-sixth, and Shelley in his twentieth, year, when their correspondence began, and Godwin's most remarkable book was published when Shelley was in the cradle. Young gentlemen of nineteen, even though they belong to the immortals, consider a man of fifty-six to be tottering upon the verge of the grave. Books published before we could spell appear to have been composed before the invention of letters. To Shelley, in short, Godwin was to all intents and purposes a venerable sage, and a fitting embodiment of hoary wisdom. A guide, philosopher, and friend—an oracle who can sanction his aspirations and direct him to the most promising paths—is almost a necessity to every youthful enthusiast; the more necessary in proportion as he has more emphatically broken with the established order. What J. S. Mill was to men who were in their early youth some twenty or thirty years ago, or Newman to young men of different views at a slightly earlier period, that Godwin was to Shelley in the years of his most impetuous speculation...

Everywhere as much a prophet as a poet, Shelley is always announcing, sometimes in exquisite poetry, the advent of the millennium. His conception of the millennium, if we try to examine precisely what it is, always embodies the same thought, that man is to be made perfect by the complete dissolution of all the traditional ties by which the race is at present bound together. In the passage which originally formed the conclusion to the 'Prometheus,' the 'Spirit of the Hour' reveals the approaching consummation. The whole passage is a fine one, and it is almost a shame to quote fragments; but we may bri fly observe that in the coming world everbody is to say exactly what he thinks: women are to be

> Gentle radiant forms,
> From custom's evil taint exempt and pure,
> Speaking the wisdom once they could not think,
> Looking emotions once they feared to feel.

Thrones, altars, judgment seats, and prisons are to be abolished when reason is absolute; and when

> The loathsome mask has fallen, the man remains
> Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man
> Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless,
> Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king
> Over himself.

To be 'unclassed, tribeless, and nationless, and we may add, without marriage, is to be in the lowest depths of barbarism. It is so, at least, in the world of realities. But the description will fit that 'state of nature' of which philosophers of the time delighted to talk. The best comment is to be found in Godwin. The great mistake of Rousseau, says that writer, was that whilst truly recognising government to be the source of all evil, he chose to praise the state which preceded government, instead of the state which, we may hope will succeed its abolition. When we are perfect, we shall get rid of all laws of every kind, and thus, in some sense, the ultimate goal of all progress is to attain precisely to that state of nature which Rousseau regretted as a thing of the past and which is described in Shelley's glowing rhetoric..............

It is scarcely necessary to insist at length upon the peculiar idealism implied in Shelley's poetry. It is, of course, the first characteristic upon which every critic must fasten. The materials with which he works are impalpable abstractions where other poets use concrete images. His poetry is like the subtle veil woven by the witch of Atlas from 'threads of fleecy mists,' 'long line

of light,' such as are kindled by the dawn and 'starbeams.' When he speaks of natural scenery the solid earth seems to be dissolved, and we are in presence of nothing but the shifting phantasmagoria of cloudland, the glow of moonlight on eternal snow or the 'golden lightning of the setting sun.' The only earthly scenery which recalls Shelley to a more material mind is that which one sees from a high peak at sunrise, when the rising vapours tinged with prismatic colours shut out all signs of human life, and we are alone with the sky and the shadowy billows of the sea of mountains. Only in such vague regions can Shelley find fitting symbolism for those faint emotions suggested by the most abstract speculations, from which he alone is able to extract an unearthly music. To insist upon this would be waste of time. Nobody, one may say briefly, has ever expanded into an astonishing variety of interpretation the familiar text of Shakespeare—

We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little lives
Are rounded with a sleep.

The doctrine is expressed in a passage in 'Hellas,' where Ahasuerus states this as the final result of European thought. The passage, like so many in Shelley, shows that he had Shakespeare in his mind without exactly copying him. The Shakespearean reference to the 'cloud-capped towers' and 'gorgeous palaces' is echoed in the verses which conclude with the words:—

This whole
Of suns and worlds, and men and beasts, and flowers
With all the violent and tempestuous workings
By which they have been, are, or cease to be,
Is but a vision: *all that it inherits*
Are motes of a sick eye, bubbles and dreams;

Thought is its cradle and its grave, nor less
The future and the past are idle shadows
Of thought's eternal flight—they have no being
Nought is but that it feels itself to be.

The italicised words point to the original in the 'Tempest'; but Shelley proceeds to expound his theory more dogmatically than Prospero, and we are not quite surprised when Mahoud is puzzled and declares that the words 'stream like a tempest of dazzling mist through his brain.' The words represent the most characteristic effect of Shelley as accurately as the aspect of consistent idealism to a prosaic mind.

It need not be said how frequently the thought occurs in Shelley. We might fix him to a metaphysical system if we interpreted him prosaically. When in 'Prometheus' Panthea describes to Asia a mysterious dream, suddenly Asia sees another shape pass between her and the 'golden dew' which gleams through its substance. 'What is it?' she asks. 'It is mine other dream,' replies Panthea. 'It disappears,' exclaims Asia. 'It passes now into my mind,' replies Panthea. We are, that is, in a region where dreams walk as visible as the dreamers, and pass into or out of a mind which is indeed only a collection of dreams. The archaic mind regarded dreams as substantial or objective realities. In Shelley the reality is reduced to the unsubtantiality of a dream. To the ordinary thinkers, the spirit is (to speak in materialist language) the receptacle of ideas. With Shelley, a little further on, we find that the relation is inverted; spirits themselves inhabit ideas; they live in the mind as in an ocean. Thought is the ultimate reality which contains spirits and ideas and dreams, if rather it is not simpler to say that everything is a dream.

The Fairy-land of Spenser might be classified in our inadequate phraseology as equally 'ideal' with Shelley's impalpable scenery. But Spenser's allegorical figures are as visible as the actors in a masque; and in fact, the 'Faery Queen' is a mosque in words. His pages are a gallery of picture, and may supply innumerable subjects for the artist. To illustrate Shelley would be as impossible as to paint a strain of music, unless, indeed, some of Turner's cloud scenery may be taken as representative of his incidental descriptions........

Fichte like Shelley, was accused of atheism, and his language would, like Shelley's be regarded by mere readers as an unfair appropriation of old words to new meanings. Shelley had of course no definite metaphysical system to set beside that of the German philosopher; and had learnt what system he had rather from Plato than from Kant. It may also be called significant that Fichte finds the ultimate point of support in conscience or duty; whereas, in Shelley's theory, duty seems to vanish, and the one ultimate reality to be rather love or the beautiful. But it would be pedantic to attempt the discovery of a definite system of opinion where there is really nothing but a certain intellectual tendency. One can only say that, somehow or other, Shelley sought comfort under the general sense that everything is but the baseless farbric of a vision, and moreover a very uncomfortable vision, made up of pain, grief, and the 'unrest which men miscall delight,' in the belief, or, if belief is too strong a word, the imagination of a transcendental influence of 'chance, and death, and mutability.' Intellectual beauty, to which he addresses one of his finest poems, is the most dintinct name of the power which he worships. Thy light alone, he exclaims—

Thy light alone, like mist on mountains driven,
Or music by the night wind sent
Through strings of some still instrument,
Or moonlight on a midnight stream,
Gives peace and truth to life's unquiet dream.

In presence of such speculations, the ordinary mass of mankind will be content with the declaring that the doctrine, if it can be called a doctrine, is totally unintelligible. The ideal world is upon this vein so hopelessly dissevered from the real, that it can give us no consolation. If life is a dream, the dream is the basis of all we know, and it is small comfort to proclaim its unreality. A truth existing all by itself in a transcendental vacuum entirely unrelated to all that we call fact, is a truth in which we can find very small comfort. And upon this matter I have no desire to differ from the ordinary mass of mankind. In truth, Shelley's creed means only a vague longing, and must be passed through some more philosophical brain before it can become a fit topic for discussion.

But the fact of this unintelligibility is by itself an explanation of much of Shelley's poetical significance. When the excellent Godwin talked about perfectibility and the ultimate triumph of truth and justice, he was in no sort of hurry about it. He was a good deal annoyed when Malthus crushed his dreams, by recalling him to certain very essential conditions of earthly life. Godwin, he said in substance, had forgotten that human beings have got to find food and standing-room on a very limited planet, and to rear children to succeed them. Remove all restrains after the fashion proposed by Godwin, and they will be very soon brought to their senses by the hard pressure of starvation, misery, and vice. Godwin made a feeble

ostensible reply, but, in practice, he was content to adjourn the realisation of his hopes for an indefinite period. Reason, he reflected, might be omnipotent, but he could not deny that it would take a long time to put forth its power. He had the strongest possible objections to any of those rough and ready modes of forcing men to be reasonable which had culminated in the revolution. So he gave up the trade of philosophising, and devoted himself to historical pursuits, and the preparation of wholesome literature for the infantile mind. To Shelley no such calm abnegation of his old aims was possible. He continued to assert passionately his belief in the creed of his early youth; but it became daily more difficult to see how it was to be applied to the actual men of existence. He might hold in his poetic raptures that the dreams were the only realities, and the reality nothing but a dream; but he, like other people, was forced to become sensible to the ordinary conditions of mundane existence.

The really exquisite strain in Shelley's poetry is precisely that which corresponds to his dissatisfaction with his master's teaching. So long as Shelley is speaking simply as a disciple of Godwin, we may admire the melodious versification, the purity and fineness of his language, and the unfailing and, in its way, unrivalled beauty of his aerial pictures. But it is impossible to find much real satisfaction in the informing sentiment The enthusiasm rings hollow, not as suggestive of insincerity, but of deficient substance and reality. Shelley was, in one aspect, a typical though a superlative example of a race of human beings which has, it may be, no fault except the fault of being intolerable. Had he not been a poet (rather a bold hypothesis, it must be admitted), he would have been a most insufferable bore. He had a

terrible affinity for the race of crotchet-mongers, the people who believe that the world is to be saved out of hand by vegetarianism, or female suffrage, or representation of minorities, the one-sided, one-ideaed, shrill-voiced, and irrepressible revolutionists. I say nothing against these particular nostrums, and still less against their advocates. I believe that bores are often the very salt of the earth, though I confess that the undiluted salt has for me a disagreeable and acrid savour. The devotees of some of Shelley's pet theories have become much noisier than they were when the excellent Godwin ruled his little clique. It is impossible not to catch in Shelley's earlier poetry. 'Queen Mab' and in the 'Revolt of Islam,' the apparent echo of much inexpressibly dreary rant which has deafened us from a thousand platforms. The language may be better; the substance is much the same.

This, which to some readers is annoyance, is to others a topic of extravagant eulogy. Not content with urging the undeniable truth that Shelley was a man of wide and generous sympathy, a detester of tyranny and a contemner of superstition, they speak of him as though he were both a leader of thought and a practical philanthropist. To make such a claim is virtually to expose him to an unfair test. It is simply ridiculous to demand from Shelley the kind of praise which we bestow upon the apostles of great principles in active life. What are we to say upon this hypothesis to the young gentleman who is amazed because vice and misery survive the revelations of Godwin, and whose reforming ardours are quenched—so far as any practical application goes—by the surprising experience that animosities fostered by the wrongs of centuries are not to be pacified by publishing a pamphlet or two about Equality, Justice and Freedom, or by

a month's speechification in Dublin? If these were Shelley's claims upon our admiration, we should be justified in rejecting them with simple contempt, or we should have to give the sacred name of philanthropist to any reckless impulsive schoolboy who thinks his elders fools and proclaims as a discovery the most rabid rant of his time. Admit that Shelley's zeal was as pure as you please, and that he cared less than nothing for money or vulgar comfort; but it is absurd to bestow upon him the praise properly reserved for men whose whole lives have been a continuous sacrifice for the good of their fellows. Nor can I recognise anything really elevating in those portions of Shelley's poetry which embody this shallow declamation. It is not the passionate war-cry of a combatant in a deadly grapple with the forces of evil, but the wail of a dreamer who has never troubled himself to translate the phrases into the language of fact. Measured by this—utterly inappropriate—standard, we should be apt to call Shelley a slight and feverish rebel against the inevitable, whose worth is little more than the futile though strangely melodious, crackling of thorns.

To judge of Shelley in this mode would be to leave out of account precisely those qualities in which his unique excellence is most strikingly manifested. Shelley speaks, it is true, as a prophet; but when he has reached his Pisgah, it turns out that the land of promise is by no means to be found upon this solid earth of ours, or definable by degrees of latitude and longitude, but is an unsubstantial phantasmagoria in the clouds. It is vain, too, that he declares that it is the true reality, and that what we call a reality is a dream. The transcendental world is—if we may say so—not really the world of archetypal ideas, but a fabric spun from empty phrases.

The more we look at it the more clearly we recognise its origin; it is the refracted vision of Godwin's prosaic system seen through an imaginative atmosphere. But that which is really admirable is, not the vision itself, but the pathetic sentiment caused by Shelley's faint recognition of its obstinate unsubstantiality. It is with this emotion that every man must sympathise in proportion as his intellectual aspirations dominate his lower passions. Forgetting all tiresome crotchets and vapid platitudes, we may be touched, almost in proportion to our own elevation of mind, by the unsatisfied yearning for which Shelley has found such manifold and harmonious utterance. There are moods in which every sensitive and philanthropic nature groans under the

> heavy and the weary weight
> Of all this unintelligible world.

Whatever our ideal may be, whatever the goal to which we hope to see mankind approximate, our spirits must often flag with a sense of our personal insignificance, and of the appalling dead weight of multiform impediments which crushes the vital energies of the world, like Etna lying upon the Titan. This despair of finding any embodiment for his own ideal, of bridging over the great gulf fixed between the actual world of sin, and sorrow, and stupidity, and the transcendental world of joy, love, and pure reason, represents the final outcome of Shelley's imperfect philosophy, and gives the theme of his most exquisite poetry. The doctrine symbolised in the 'Alastor' by the history of the poet who has seen in vision a form of perfect beauty, and dies in despair of ever finding it upon earth (he seems, poor man! to have looked for it somewhere in the neighbourhood of Afghanistan), is the clue to the history of his own intellectual life. He is

happiest when he can get away from the world altogether into a vague region, having no particular relation to time or space; to the valleys haunted by the nymphs in the 'Prometheus'; or the mystic island in the 'Epipsychidion,' where all sights and sounds are as the background of a happy dream, fitting symbols of sentiments too impalpable to be fairly grasped in language or that 'calm and blooming cove' of the lines in the Enganean hills.

The lyrics which we all know more or less by heart are so many different modes of giving utterance to—

> The desire of the moth for the star,
> Of the night for the morrow
> The devotion to something afar
> From the sphere of our sorrow.

He is always dwelling upon the melancholy doctrine expressed in his last poem by the phrase that God has made good and the means of good irreconcilable. The song of the Skylark suggests to him that we are doomed to 'look before and after,' and to 'pine for what is not." Our sweetest songs (how should it be otherwise?) are those which tell of saddest thought. The wild commotion in sea, sky, and earth, which heralds the approach of the south-west wind, harmonises with his dispirited restlessness, and he has to seek refuge in the vague hope that his thoughts, cast abroad at random like the leaves and clouds, may somehow be prophetic of a magical transformation of the world. His most enduring poetry is, in one way or other, a continuous comment upon the famous saying in 'Julian and Maddalo,' suggested by the sight of his fellow-Utopian, whose mind has been driven into madness by an uncongenial world.

> Most wretched men
> Are cradled into poetry by wrong.
> They learn in suffering what they teach in song;

Some poets suffer under evils of a more tangible kind than those which tormented Shelley; and some find a more satisfactory mode of escape from the sorrows which beset a sensitive nature. But the special beauty of Shelley's poetry is so far due to the fact that we feel it to be the voice of a pure and lofty nature, however crude may have been the form taken by some of his unreal inspiration.

[*From Macaulay's Essays.*]

Bunyan is almost the only writer who ever gave to the abstract the interest of the concrete. In the works of many celebrated authors, men are mere personifications. We have not a jealous man, but jealousy; not a traitor, but perfidy; not a patriot, but patriotism. The mind of Bunyan, on the contrary, was so imaginative that personifications, when he dealt with them, became men. A dialogue between two qualities, in his dream, has more dramatic effect than a dialogue between two human beings in most plays. In this respect the genius of Bunyan bore a great resemblance to that of a man who had very little else in common with him, Percy Bysshe Shelley. The strong imagination of Shelley made him an idolater in his own despite. Out of the most indefinite terms of a hard, cold, dark, metaphysical system, he made a gorgeous Pantheon, full of beautiful, majestic, and life-like forms. He turned atheism itself into a mythology, rich with visions as glorious as the gods that live in the marble of Phidias, or the virgin saints that smile on us from the canvas of Murillo. The Spirit of Beauty, the Principle of Good, the Principle of Evil, when he treated of them, ceased to be abstractions. They took shape and colour. They were no longer mere

words, but "intelligible forms"; "fair humanities": objects of love, of adoration, or of fear. As there can be no stronger sign of a mind destitute of the poetical faculty than that tendency which was so common among the writers of the French school to turn images into abstractions, Venus, for example, into Love, Minerva into Wisdom, Mars into War, and Bacchus into Festivity, so there can be no stronger sign of a mind truly poetical than a disposition to reverse this abstracting process, and to make individuals out of generalities. Some of the metaphysical and ethical theories of Shelley were certainly most absurd and pernicious. But we doubt whether any modern poet has possessed in an equal degree some of the highest qualities of the great ancient masters. The words bard and inspiration, which seem so cold and affected when applied to other modern writers, have a perfect propriety when applied to him. He was not an author, but a bard. His poetry seems not to have been an art, but an inspiration. Had he lived to the full age of man, he might not improbably have given to the world some great work of the very highest range in design and execution.

[*From Dowden's "Studies in Literature."*]

Shelley assuredly derives nothing as an artist from the eighteenth century, except from such parts of it as run on and connect themselves with nineteenth century art—such, for example, as Rousseau's feeling for nature his sentimental ardour, and the romantic horrors of Mrs. Radcliffe. But the intellectual basis or background, of Shelley's earlier poetry belongs, on the political side wholly, and in large part upon the metaphysical side, to the *Aufklarung*, the critical movement which preceded the Revolution.

Shelley came in a time of reaction; but his imaginative motives lay less in events than in ideas, and unlike Byron, he remained in his inner spirit wholly unaffected for evil by the reaction. No Girondin in early Revolution days could possess a more unqualified faith in the Revolution than did the young English poet in the days of the Regency. He saw indeed an enormous antagonism of evil set over against good! but his white flame of devotion, to what seemed to him the sacred cause, was thereby only quickened and intensified. Whether it be an indication of intellectual narrowness and weakness, or rather of the martyr and saint-like strength, no touch of that cynicism which made so large a part of Byron's complex mode of feeling came to trouble the simplicity, or divide the energy, of Shelley's soul. De Tocqueville wrote a chapter to show how the French Revolution, disregarding territorial boundaries, and viewing man as man, proceeded alone among political movements in the manner of religious revolutions, and extended itself by preaching and propagandism. This aspect of the Revolution in especial is apparent in both the writings of Shelley and his youthful apostleship, particularly during his mission to Ireland. Perhaps one may discover something more heroic in Byron's sacrifice of self on behalf of a people from whom he expected no miracle of virtue, and of patriots whom he half despised, than in Shelley's preparedness for surrender for the whole human race about to be suddenly enfranchised and transfigured; and it is true that there is an absence of sanity and adult force in Shelley's revolutionary propagandism; but Byron's sacrifice was not unmingled with motives of egoism, and the life he offered up was one worn with excess, and weary through satiety.

There is an intellectual relationship between Shelley and Godwin, closer and more important than their subsequent family connexion through Shelley's second marriage. Godwin, as Mr. Leslie Stephen has noticed, "more than any English thinker, resembles those French theorists who represented the early revolutionary impulse," "His opinions were rooted too deeply in abstract speculations to be affected by any storms raging in the region of concrete phenomena . . . . He remained a Republican Abdiel throughout the long dark winter of reaction." It may safely be affirmed that every leading idea in Shelley's earlier writings, can be paralleled by a doctrine taught in Godwin's "Political Justice." Both Godwin and Shelley, in common with the century from which sprang their beliefs, were deficient in the historical sense. "I am determined to apply myself," Shelley writes, "to a study that is hateful and disgusting to my very soul. . . . . I mean that record of crimes and miseries, history." And again, in a letter to Godwin, "I am unfortunately little skilled in English history, and the interest which it excites in me is so feeble, that I find it a duty to attain merely to that general knowledge of it which is indispensable." And again very beautifully and characteristically Shelley writes to another correspondent, "Facts are not what we want to know in poetry, in history, in the lives of individual men, in satire, or panegyric. They are the mere divisions, the arbitrary points on which we hang and to which we refer those delicate and evanescent hues of mind, which language delights and instructs us in precise proportion as it expresses." Byron declares that from the moment he could read, his grand passion was *history*, and there will be found in his Life by Moore a remarkable extract from a memorandum book of 1807, in

which Byron sets down a list of the historical writers whose works he had perused; the list occupies more than two pages, and includes histories of England, Scotland, Ireland, Rome, Greece, France, Spain, Portugal, Turkey, Russia, Sweden, Prussia, Germany, Italy, Hindostan, America. "The greater part of these," Byron adds, "I perused before the age of fifteen." Shelley was about to reform the world, but empirical knowledge, experience, was not needed for the task; the gross stuff of society was to be penetrated by the purifying flame of an idea, and all its grossness was to be burnt away.

Godwin (again I quote from Mr. Leslie Stephen) "resents the tendency of the revolutionary school towards the deification of the pure intellect; . . . . 'sound reasoning and truth, when adequately communicated, must always be victorious over error; sound reasoning and truth are capable of being so communicated; truth is omnipotent; the vices and moral weaknesses of men are not invincible; man is perfectible, or in other words susceptible of perpetual improvement," what is this but the Revolt of Islam put into intellectual formulæ? In Shelley's poem, indeed, written at a time when the Revolution seemed to have temporarily failed, and when the forces of re-action were strong, the power of error is more justly estimated; yet if evil should triumph, it can be but for a season; the moment must arrive, when before the breath of some pure prophet or prophetess, all the piled up wrongs of the earth must go down and dissolve. In the "Prometheus" ages must pass away before the tyrant falls, and the delivered is unbound; but the day of rejoicing is certain even if it be far off, and in the end it will come with sudden glory. "The worst of criminals might be reformed by reasoning"—such was

Godwin's happy conviction. Shelley differs only as a poet must differ from a philosopher—he assigns a larger share in such possible reformation to the emotions, and the action upon the heart of ideals of justice and charity. "To hate a murderer as unreasonable as to hate his weapon"—so thought Godwin; and Shelley poetizes the doctrine when Laon bids the tyrant Othman go free. To account for the prevalence of error, Godwin "sets up a dark power of imposture which fights, and has hitherto fought with singular success, against the power of truth . . . . Kings and priests represent the incarnation of evil." The Zeus by whose order Prometheus is chained to the rock is this dark power of imposture; he is also named the Anarch Custom; it is he who has authorized the superstitions and the tyrannies of the world. "We can scarcely hesitate," wrote Godwin, "to conclude universally that law is an institution of the most pernicious tendency." And with Shelley law is everywhere at odds with love, and in a reign of love it must at last disappear. As to the marriage bond, Godwin is merely uncertain whether the future unions of the sexes will be by promiscuous intercourse, or alliances terminable at the pleasure of either party. Shelley exhibits in his original "Laon and Cythna," and his "Rosalind and Helen," the beauty of free love, and the miseries and degrading slavery of unions where no love exists or which are protracted after love has ceased. All the illusions of the Revolution, many of them generous illusions,—perfectibility, disregard of tradition and inheritance, the contrast between a benevolent Nature and the selfishness of Society,—are to be found in full vigour in Shelley. Also all that was admirable and noble, all that was of a constructive character in the Revolution is to

be found—its enthusiasm of humanity, its passion for justice, its recognition of a moral element in politics, its sentiment of the brotherhood of men.

Shelley, again, is nothing if he is not revolutionary and at the same time transcendental. If in Byron one side of the revolution displays itself with power, that which is more materialistic and more personal, the assertion of unbounded egoism and the rights of the individual, in Shelley appears the reverse side, that which is more ideal, more religious, its tendency to merge the personal life in a larger life which is impersonal, whether the life of Humanity or of external Nature, the pantheistic tendency as De Tocqueville named it. With a theoretic mind, up to a certain point, precociously developed, though not mature, Shelley, in earlier as well as later years, sought after a creed; he could not steep himself in mere sensation, in a luxury of odours, and colours, and sounds; and at first, not having had time or faculty to develop out of experience and his deepest thoughts and feelings a genuine faith, he accepted one ready-made, lived in it and by it; and this creed,—that of the critical movement preceding the Revolution,—lies behind the colour, melody, and interwoven imagery of all his earlier verse.

The ethics of self-interest with which Shelley came in contact through the French *philosophes*, had no attraction for him; but the science and metaphysics of the *Aufklarung* imposed themselves upon his intellect as if they were a discovery of new and sacred truth. The Revolution, however, had not been self-consistent in its metaphysics, nor was Shelley. The deism of Robespierre had appeared impious to the Catholics. Shel-

ley, belonging as he did partly to the nineteenth century and to the transcendental movement, could not be satisfied by a barren deism, the worship of an Etre Supreme, out of and above nature; but when he caught up the materialism of the French atheistic philosophy, he did not sufficiently calculate upon an element in his own nature which, though opposed to deism, was equally opposed to atheism. From first to last Shelley moved spirit-like in a world which was spiritual, and strenuously denying the existence of anything immaterial, he attains, what his feeling and imagination demanded, by a system of levelling-up, by endowing matter with all the attributes of mind. It is impossible to reduce to entire consistency the statement made by Shelley at the time when "Queen Mab" was written. A creative God he constantly denies; but he will not deny the existence of a Spirit of the Universe; this Spirit, however, cannot be immaterial; its action is necessary, it is incapable of will and of moral qualities, it is equally the author of evil and of good; we can stand in no relation to it, and hence religion is impossible. Yet because the principle of the universe acts necessarily, it acts righteously; all evil is but apparent, and it becomes possible to love and to adore.

Shelley's faith was no dead accretion of dogma around his intellect; what he could not make his own fell away; what remained was a vital portion of his being, and with his growth it underwent vital processes of change. When Shelley wrote "Adonais" he had outgrown the creed of "Queen Mab"; his materialism had given place to idealism; he no longer had any hesitation in attributing moral qualities to the Universal

God; he was even prepared to admit the existence of an Evil Spirit of the world, in order that he might save the moral character of the Supreme Being.

Mr. Browning, in his preface to the forged letters ascribed to Shelley, ventures to conjecture that, had he lived, Shelley would have come to accept the Christian faith. It may safely be affirmed that only in some transcendental sense, could Shelley ever have conceived the existence of a "Son of God." In his later years, Shelley distinguished between the doctrine of the founder of the Christian religion and the theology of historical Christianity. Shortly before hit death he wrote: "I agree with Moore that the doctrines of the French and Material Philosophy are as false as they are pernicious, but still they are better than Christianity, inasmuch as anarchy is better than despotism: for this reason, that the former is for a season, and that the latter is eternal." While remaining hostile to historical Christianity, Shelley had come to look on Jesus as a pure and impassioned prophet, who held a faith not very different from his own in its later development. Jesus conceived the ruling power of the universe as "mysteriously and illimitably pervading the frame of things," "an overruling Spirit of the collective energy of the moral and material world." This Spirit Jesus called by the venerable name of God, nor did Shelley refuse to use the same word. Whether anything analogous to what we call *Will* can be attributed to this Power is a question which Shelley declined to consider; the action of the power upon our spirits he conceived to be of the kind which we somewhat vaguely term impersonal. How far Shelley had travelled from the doctrine set forth in the notes to "Queen Mab," will appear from the following passage of singular beauty

which occurs in the unfinished "Essay on Christianity":—

"We live and move and think; but we are not the creators of our own origin and existence. We are not the arbiters of every motion of our own complicated nature; we are not the masters of our own imaginations and moods of mental being. There is a power by which we are surrounded, like the atmosphere in which some motionless lyre is suspended, which visits with its breath our silent chords at will. Our most imperial and stupendous qualities—those on which the majesty and the power of humanity is erected—are, relatively to the inferior portion of its mechanism, active and imperial; but they are the passive slaves of some higher and more omnipotent Power. This Power is God; and those who have seen God have, in the period of their purer and more perfect nature, been harmonized by their own will to so exquisite a consentaneity of power as to give forth divinest melody, when the breath of universal being sweeps over their frame."

This was the kind of faith which his own nature was, in its moments of highest light and ardour, fitted to yield to Shelley......

In the literature of England, and in the darkest hour of reaction, the Revolution found a banner-bearer an embodied genius half formed from the spirit of swift, wild, and beautiful things in nature, and half from the keenest joys and anguish of humanity; one made to be a saint and a martyr of revolution, the delicate victim thrown to the lions of authorised opinion; a poet framed for intensities of faith, of charity, and of hope; for illuminated heights of rapture and of song. But Shelley, who, by virtue of his swift-weaving imagination, his artistic impulses, and the incantation of his verse, belongs to the nineteenth century, was by virtue of the intellectual background and basis of his poetry a child of the eighteenth century, a true volunteer against old-tyrannies

in the wars of enfranchisement of the Republic. In order that he should be a revolter it was not needful to Shelley that the Revolution should promise an immediate success. The abstractions created by the intellect and the passions of that age were to him the only realities, and he believed that their history would be long. Living as he did in the idea, concrete facts appeared to him but as shadows, ever varying and shifting, thrown from accidental objects which intervened between the world of men and the high, white light of the eternal world. For such poetry, which nourished itself upon abstractions, and existed independently of the accidents of the time, a career, even in a season of re-action, was open. Laon and Cythna may stand bound amid the flames; but in due time the martyrs will reach that radiant isle sanctified by the Temple of the Spirit. For countless ages Prometheus may hang nailed to the mountain-wall; but the day will dawn of his deliverance, when the whole sphere of earth must break into blossom and into song for Shelley, whether France were enslaved or free liberty remained. But such political passion as Wordsworth's united itself with an actual cause. It was roused by the presence of the elements of noble national life, not somewhere apart in the air, not in some remote political *primum mobile*, but in the veritable life of a nation. For such poetry of revolution after the regime of the Directory and the 18th Brumaire the career was closed.

[*From Herford's " Age of Wordsworth."*]

In Byron and Shelley the spirit of the Revolution first entered in poetry. The liberty which Wordsworth adored was from the first rather the condition in which men observe morality without outer interference, than

that in which they follow the bent of passion without restraint; and both he and Coleridge, after their bitter disillusion, learned to look on political laws, as such, with the idealizing sympathy of Burke. But with Shelley and Byron, liberty is a vehement and politically anarchical outpouring of individuality into action; an ideal more egoistic in Byron, in Shelley more spiritual and humane. The counterpart in poetry of this political individualism was the *self-assertion of the artist*. Wordsworth conceived that he was most himself when he most admitted the impress of Nature and his boldest imaginings jealously preserved the framework of elementary fact. Shelley held Wordsworth's theory of Imagination, but the world of rainbows and caverns which filled his own had no such intimate kinship with the actual one, it was controlled by the laws not of Nature, but of beauty,—beauty no longer only 'a living presence of the earth'......

No previous English poetry wholly satisfied men possessed by this mingled ideal of the republican and the artist, this passion for freedom and beauty—not even Milton, who came nearest. Rather, they turned their eyes to ancient Greece and mediæval Italy. And here their affinity becomes clear to one who, in years a younger contemporary of Southey and his life-long friend,—yet matured only in the last years of Keats and Shelley—Walter Savage Landor. Landor was the first republican Hellenist—the first Englishman who revealed Greek beauty without an alloy of the meretricious diction of the eighteenth century, which still touches the work of so fine a Grecian as Gray. Thus within the heart of Romanticism a 'classic movement' arose, which, more than any other trait, sharply marks off the later from the two earlier groups. Goethe indicated the fact in his

symbolic way when he introduced Byron as the child of the Greek Helen and the Romantic Faust. But Romantic Hellenism had to contend not only with the expiring traditions of the Augustan school, but with the prejudice against everything 'classical' which these had begotten among innovators of every shade. The Stowey poets led the revolt against the Augustans in the name of a poetic mysticism which was quite as foreign to the Greeks; and the frank artistic handling of mythic story by the Greek poets appealed only at moments of experiment, such as produced the *Laodamia* to Wordsworth, who repudiated all myth, and never appealed at all to Coleridge, who entered only into its mystical and visionary aspect. Nor had either any share in the Attic gifts of urbane wit and gracious humour. 'I do not think he had much fealing for the classical or elegant,' says Hazlitt of Coleridge at Stowey, maliciously recalling that his host had spoken without insight of the *Georgics*, and 'had no idea of pictures.' The very term 'elegant,' as he elsewhere points out, was banished from the vocabulary of the Stowey brotherhood, and wherever their influence penetrated it disappeared from the language of criticism. Greek influence found access first in minds less touched by current literary controversies: in Landor, polishing *Gebir* among the wilds of Wales; in Peacock, buried among the Attic folios and marbles of the British Museum. Moore and Campbell strayed awhile along erotic or material byways of the Greek world, Scott and Southey blithely ignored it. The effective expression of the new Hellenism in English poetry begins with Byron's denunciation of Lord Elgin's spoliation of the Parthenon. Byron, though very far from a Greek, did more than any other single man to create the

passion for Greece, and to lend it poignant utterance. The Elgin marbles, however, acquired for the nation in 1816 through the passionate urgency of Haydon, became thenceforth 'great allies' of the Hellenic cause. Greek legend was the chosen haunt of Keats, but to Shelley and to Byron Greece was also the first historic land of freedom, 'the mother of the free,' the fatherland of exiles. 'I will teach thine infant tongue,' wrote Shelley in 1817, when about to leave England for ever with his one remaining child, 'to call upon those heroes old in their own language, ...that by such name a patriot's birthright thou mayst claim.' And Shelley, to whom all mediæval mythology presented itself only as 'superstition,' found in the myths of Greece a world in which his imagination could range, and his profound religious instinct embody itself, secure from the paralyzing virus of theological strife. In Shelley and in Byron Hellenism was thus sharply opposed to the mediævalism of the earlier Romantics—of Coleridge, of Scott; in Keats's more purely artistic nature the two were brought once more into harmony......................

None of his contemporaries lived from first to last so completely under the dominance of 'soul-light'; his errors in conduct and weaknesses in art were alike rooted in this supreme quality. He went through life possessed by a vision of 'intellectual' beauty which, without doubt, dazzled as well as illumined, and made his view of society at certain points grotesque and crude, and his earlier poetry a radiant effusion which only gradually acquired substance and definition. Beauty, to his imagination, was always in some degree a negation of fixed form; it implied a perpetuity of flowing energy. Hence his worship of beauty was but an aspect of his worship of freedom; and

he seized with avidity upon the Godwinian formulas, which in their turn fostered his native bias towards the abstract. Immense tracts of the world's rich concrete life, everything characteristically mediæval in literature, and all Christianity save that of Christ, history, institutions, besiness, failed to the last to touch his imagination. Save for a single situation he was indifferent to story-interest in poetry, and unskilled to excite it. His metaphysical speculations owe little to the faculty which wrests a meaning from facts by grappling with them at close quarters. But he has the grandeur of his simplicity also. Beatrice and Prometheus, supreme types of heroic endurance, could only have been created by one whose fiery revolt against evil had never been allayed by custom. And that intuition of beauty, at first so abstract and vague, gradually became under the spell of Italy, a permanent revelation of loveliness, which the whole history of poetry scarcely transcends.

NOTES ON

LINES WRITTEN AMONG THE EUGANEAN HILLS.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

This poem forms "a beautiful description of a day's landscape in Italy."

The Euganean Hills are a low range of mountains in Lombardy, in the west of the province of Padua, extending for about 10 miles from North-west to South-east. The mountains are of volcanic origin, and covered with wood. The highest point is Monte Benda, 2,000 feet in elevation.

The following is Shelley's description of these hills as seen from "the break of land which breaks the flow of Adria towards Venice":—

"The hoar
And airy Alps, towards the north, appeared,
Thro' mist, a heaven-sustaining bulwark, reared
Between the east and west; and half the sky
Was roofed with clouds of rich emblazonry,
Dark purple at the zenith, which still grew
Down the steep west into a wondrous hue
Brighter than burning gold, even to the rent
Where the swift sun yet paused in his descent
Among the many-folded hills. They were
Those famous Euganean hills, which bear
As seen from Lido through the harbour piles,
The likeness of a clump of peaked isles—
And then, as if the earth and sea had been
Dissolved into one lake of fire, were seen
Those mountains towering as from waves of flame,
Around the vaporous sun, from which there came
The inmost purple spirit of light, and made
Their very peaks transparent." (*Julian and Maddalo*)

1, 2. *Many a green......misery*, there must needs be many pleasant spots in the wide sea of human existence which is full of deep misery. The first part of the poem is an allegory or continued metaphor.

6. *Drifting*, floating or driven along by the force of the wind.

7. *Solid darkness*, darkness so thick that it seems to be solid; "darkness which may be felt" (*Exodus*, X, 21); "palpable obscure" (*Paradise Lost*, II, 406).

10. *Big with*, filled with.
11. *Fleet*, swift.
13. *Riving*, splitting; tearing aunder.
14. *Drank*—wrongly used for *drunk*, for the sake of the rhyme.
15. *O'er-brimming*, full to overflowing.
17. *Seems*, to himself.
18. *Weltering*, rolling or tumbling about.
Through eternity, everlastingly (in another state of existence).
19, 20. *The dim......shore*, a periphrasis for the horizon.

26. *The haven of the grave*, the grave where alone the voyage of life can come to an end.

27. *Greet*, welcome him.
29. *His*, his heart.
30. *Wander*, though he wander
31. *That day*, the day of death.
34. *Then*, when he is dead.
Wreak him, inflict on him.

35. *Or no*, should properly be "or not"; for the words are elliptical for: "or there be *not* such."

36. *Senseless......cold*, senseless and cold is the breast--a common poetical inversion. So also in l. 38.

39. *The pulse of pain*, the painfully pulsating blood—a synecdoche. *Which* is governed by *did fill*.

40. *Living*, sensitive.
41. *Swerve*, turn aside; recoil or shrink.
42. *Tortured*, agonised.
44. *December's bough*, a bough in wintry December.
45. *Northern sea*, cold, polar sea.

47. *The wretch* whose skull and bones lie there (l. 49).

52. *Boundaries of*, forming the boundaries of; standing at the meeting of.

53. *Wail*, lamentation.

54. *But the seamews*, except the wailing cry of the seamews.

57. *Slaughtered town*, town whose inhabitants are put to the sword.

59. *Fratricides*, men who kill their brother-men.

60. *Bones*—governed by *around*.

62. *Him*—the wretch of l. 47.

63. *Dim*—qualifying *him*.

64. *Clothed with*, invested with; gave to.

65. *What*. The antecedent of *what* is governed by *clothed*: "clothed that (=which) now moves," &c.

66. *Many flowering islands*, means the same thing as "many a green isle" of l. 1.

67. *The waters of wide Agony*—means the same thing as "the deep wide sea of misery," of l. 2.

68-9. *To such a......piloted*, the pleasant sensations excited by my surroundings carried me back in memory to such a happy period of the past in my life of misery.

69. *Bark*, vessel (see l. 8.)—nominative to *was led*.

Piloted, guided.

71. *Pæan*, song of rejoicing. Among the ancient Greeks the *pæan* was a song of rejoicing in honour of Apollo, chiefly used on occasions of victory and triumph. Such songs were named pæans, because the words *Io Pæan!* which alluded to Apollo's contest with the serpent, frequently occurred in them.

72. *Legioned*, collected in legions. A legion, in the Roman army, was a body of troops varying from three to five thousand in number.

73. *Uprise*, rising up; rising—an obsolete word as a noun.

74. *Hoar*, white (with the frozen dew lying on them).

75. *Dewy*, moist with dew (being half-condensed.)

76. *Shades*, spectres.

76-7. *Till the......bursts*, till the sun bursts through the eastern sky.

77. *Clouds of even*, evening clouds.

78. *Flecked*, spotted ; variegated.

Fire, the red light of the setting sun.

Azure, patches of blue sky.

80. *Purple grain*, purple hue. *Grain* meant a reddish coloured dye made from an insect (the kermes), and is hence used for a red colour of any tint or hue, as crimson, scarlet, &c., and by poets as equivalent to *Tyrian purple*.

Starred, bespangled.

81. *Golden*—because they reflect the golden rays of the sun.

82. *Sunlight woods*, woods bathed with the light of the sun.

84. *Fitful*, blowing irregularly; irregularly variable.

85. *Broken*, dispersed by the heat of the sun.

86. *Vapours cloven*—is the same as "broken mist."

87. *Streaming*, in a stream.

91. *Waveless*, without undulations of surface ; level.

92. *Bounded*, to the view.

93. *Islanded by*, having scattered on it like islands in the sea.

94. *Day's azure eyes*, that is, the blue morning sky.

95. *Nursling*, one who, or that which, is nursed ; an infant.

Venice. No city in the world occupies so remarkable a situation, and, Rome excepted, no city of Italy is so famous. It is built on about eighty small islands in a lagoon formed by the retreating of the sea. A strip of land, known as the Lido, extends northwards, at a distance of about four miles from the mainland, enclosing the lagoon and islands, and has a number of openings, giving access to the sea. Communication between Venice and the mainland is afforded by a viaduct, with a railway two miles long, with more than 200 arches. On the south side of the city is a broad canal, Della Giudecca, opening out the canal Di San Marco, and so communicating with the sea, and dividing the city proper from the suburb of Giudecca (a long narrow island), and

the smaller island of Soan Giorgi. The north-western limit of the city is marked by the canal Della Fondamente. The city proper is nearly triangular in shape, more than 2½ miles long and 1½ miles wide protected at the eastern extremity the Castle of San Pietro, on a small island formed by the canal Di Castello. The approaches to the city are guarded by strong fortifications. The Grand Canal, or Canallazzo, has a serpentine course, and divides the city into two portions. The breadth varies from 100 to 180 feet, and both sides are lined by magnificent buildings, close to the water's edge, giving easy access to the gondolas, which are the chief means of conveyance. The canal is spanned, near the centre of the city, by the famous Rialto (*rivo alto*, "deep stream"), a bridge built about 1590, with a single arch, 90 feet in span and by two iron bridges, built in 1845 and 1858. There are more than 100 smaller canals, crossed by about 400 bridges, generally steep, so as to allow of the passage of gondolas, and ascended by flights of steps.

96. *A peopled labyrinth.* See the description of Venice given in the preceding note.

97. *Amphitrite's distined halls,* destined to become the halls of Amphitrite, that is, to be submerged by the ocean.

Amphitrite, a Nereid or an Oceanid (nymph of the sea or of the ocean), wife of Poseidon and goddess of the sea, especially of the Mediterranean. In Homer *Amphitrite* is merely the name of the sea, and it first occurs as that of a goddess in Hesiod. Later poets again use the word as equivalent to the sea in general.

98. *Her sire,* Oceanus; the ocean.

Paves......waves—referring to the fact of Venice being intersected by numerous canals, so that she might be said to have roads paved with water, as other cities have roads paved with stone, or other solid material.

99. *Beaming,* shining; bright.

100. *Behind.* He is on the mainland of Italy, and must look *eastwards* towards Venice, so that the rising sun would be behind, or on the farther side of, Venice.

102. *Level quivering line,* that is, the horizon.

Quivering—describes the effect of the light on the water.

103. *Crystalline*, clear as crystal.

104. *Chasm of light*, gap in the light or brightness.

107. *Obelisk*, a tall, four-sided pillar, gradually tapering as it rises, and cut off at the top in the form of a flat pyramid; any pillar, especially one set up in an open square or court.

108. *Inconstant*, unsteady (on account of the quivering waters behind them).

109. *Altar*. The columns, &c., of Venice are compared to those of a church.

110. *Sapphire-tinted*, blue. The sapphire is a precious stone, consisting of crystallized alumina coloured with oxide of iron, and is of different colours; but in common usage the name is restricted to the blue kind.

112. *Shrines*—here used for sacrificial altars.

113. *As to pierce*, as if to pierce.

113-4. *The dome.........old*, that is, the oracle of Apollo at Delphi.

Dome of gold, roof overlaid with gold.

Apollo, the God of the Sun in Homeric mythology, the embodiment of perfect wisdom and foresight, of swift and far—reaching intelligence, and hence of poetry, music, &c. He is represented as a beautiful youth, a model of manly beauty, with a bow and arrows, or with a lyre. His most celebrated temple was that at Delphi in Phocis, where the celebrated oracles were delivered by his prophetess, the Pythia.

115. *Sun-girt*, that is, surrounded by the sunlit ocean.

116. *His queen*—referring to the maritime greatness of Venice in the Middle Ages.

120. *Hallow.........bier*, hallows the ocean by making it thy grave, that is, by thy being buried under it.

121. *A less drear ruin, &c.* He means that her present enslaved condition makes her a more miserable relic of past splendour than if she were literally in ruins.

122. *Conquest-branded*. The government of Venice was at first a democracy; but, towards the middle of the thirteenth

century (about 1247), it became a settled aristocracy. From the ninth till the sixteenth century, it was the greatest and most splendid commercial city of Europe, and enjoyed many privileges. Venice was overturned in 1797. It remained subject to Austria till 1805, when, after the battle of Austerlitz, it was annexed to the French kingdom of Italy. In 1814, however, it returned under the power of Austria, and was under it when Shelley was writing. It now belongs to the kingdom of Italy.

123-4. *Stooping to...throne*, degraded from thy imperial greatness, and submitting to the vilest of slaves.

Slave of slaves, worst of slaves: cf. "king of kings," "lord of lords." Austria is so called because she had been conquered by the French.

124. *Among the waves*, when thou art buried among the waves.

126. *Once before*—that is, before Venice was built on them.

127. *Depopulate*, depoulated, of inhabitants. Compare *situate* for *situated*.

129. *Where many a palace gate, &c.* Venice, "the once great republic, into which flowed the commerce and wealth of the East, which ruled the Mediterranean, sacked the Imperial city, and set bounds to the Ottoman power at a moment when it seemed ready to overwhelm all Europe, is now, after a duration of thirteen centuries, for ever extinguished. Its fall without a struggle was, doubtless, prepared by a decay of its moral energies. The nobles who once swayed the councils of Venice, and commanded her fleets, had no longer any object but to attend public processions, to pay court to their lady, to while away the evening at her casinos, and to heighten the gay license of the Carnival. The people, enslaved, had lost all national spirit. The republic of Venice, with all its bright series of triumphs, is now an empty name; it remains, however, next to Rome, the finest of all the Italian cities. It cannot, indeed, boast of any classic monuments, nor are its churches built in so lofty a style; but its palaces, the gay architecture of Palladio, present a range of the finest private mansions that were ever erected. The effect is greatly heightened by its situation, on seventy islets of the Adriatic, partly on the rock, partly on piles

sunk into the sea, and a marine channel, instead of a pavement, perforating every street. Scarcely is there room left for a foot passenger; the Venetian is conveyed in the gay gondola from palace to palace. Thus Venice appears rising from the waters, with its numberless domes and towers; and attended by several smaller islands, each crowned with spires and pinnacles, presents the appearance of a vast city floating on the bosom of the ocean. The row of magnificent but decaying places which extend along the Grand Canal, with their light arabesque balconies and casements, their marble porticoes, and peculiar chimneys, present one of the most superb and singular scenes in the world. They stand in the majesty of ruin, and exhibit the most affecting combinations of former splendour and present decay."

130. *Sea-flowers*, that is, sea-weeds.

132. *Abandoned*, deserted or lonely, desolate.

133. *Sullenly*—refers to the fact that there are hardly any perceptible tides in the Mediterranean Sea or its arms. Byron calls it "that *tideless* sea."

134. *Watery way*, way over the water.

135. *Spread.........oar*, that is, make all the speed he can.

139. *Starlight deep*, ocean lit up by the stars. *Starlight* is used as an adjective. The usual epithet is "star-lit."

140. *Masque of death*, a masque in which the dead are the performers. *Masque*, masquerade; an assembly of persons wearing masks, and amusing themselves with dancing, conversation, and other diversions.

142. *Those who......behold*, those who only see thy towers (without knowing the history).

143. *Aerial gold*, the golden air or atmosphere, that is, air pervaded by the golden beams of the early morning sun.

145, *Would......were*, would not imagine that they were.

146. *Human forms*—the present inhabitants of Venice. The expression is contemptuously used: "they have little but the form of men: they are worms in spirit."

147. *Pollution-nourished*, nourished by the decomposing corpse.

151. *The Celtic Anarch*, the Emperor of Austria. Shelley is wrong in calling the Austrians Celts: they are Teutons: see l. 228, and note.

Anarch. This is a violent exaggeration: the emperor might have been a despot but he could not have been an anarch as long as he had an established form of government, however absolute it might be. Early in the eighteenth century the Lombardo-Venetian provinces were allotted to Austria; the kingdom of Sardinia and the Genoese provinces, to the royal house of Savoy; Lucca was created a duchy; Tuscany was restored; the Bourbons regained possession of Naples, the Pope of the Papal States, and the family of Este of the duchy of Modena and other territories.

154. *A hundred cities*—referring to the numerous republics of Italy in mediæval times.

155. *Chained*, enslaved.

158. *Twining*, intertwining; uniting.

160. *Perish thou and they*, may thou and they perish. The verb is in the subjunctive mood, expressing a wish.

161. *Clouds*—in apposition to *thou and they*

162. *Sun consumed away*, glory which is exhausted or spent.

163-4. *Like flowers......hours.* The new nations springing up in the course of time are compared to flowers blossoming in the desert.

164. *The waste of years and hours*—that is, the desert of time.

166. *Kindly*, genial; pleasing.

169-70. *As the garment......world*, as thy sky covers the world as with a garment.

170. *Immortally*, everlastingly; for ever.

171. *Remembrance*—governed by *let* in l. 167.

172-3. *The tattered......wan*, the relics of thy past greatness which scarcely hide thy present wretched condition.

174-8. *That a......in thee*—a noun clause in apposition to *remembrance* in l. 171.

174-5. *A tempest-cleaving ..... Albion*, an English poet with a soaring, independent spirit. The poet means Byron, who had settled down in Venice at the time (1818.)

174. *Tempest-cleaving*, winging his way through the storm-clouds ; of lofty poetic genius.

175. *Albion*, a poetical name for England. England was so named from its ancient inhabitants called *Albiones*. The usual etymology of Lat. *albus*, white, the name said to have been given by Julius Cæsar in allusion to the "white cliffs" of Dover, is quite untenable, as Aristotle mentions the islands of Albion and Ierne (Ireland) four hundred years before the invasion of Cæsar.

176-7. *Driven from......dreams*, driven from the land of his forefathers by the evil things imagined about him by people. Lady Byron's leaving him was taken as the proof of some hideous guilt, and a furious storm of abuse fell upon him from the public.

Streams. The metaphor is sustained : swans live on the margins of streams or lakes.

178. *Found......thee*—keeps up the metaphor in *swan*.

178-80. *Ocean welcomed......his*. Byron was passionately fond of the sea : to be borne on its breast was his "joy of youthful sports" ; and it was to him a source of lofty emthusiasm and pleasure in his solitary wanderings on the shores of Italy and Greece.

180. *Grew his*, communicated itself to him.

Sprung—used for *sprung*.

182. *Thunder-fit*, sudden burst of thunder.

183. *Chastening*, subduing.

184. *Poesy's unfailing river*, the perennial or uninterrupted stream of poetry.

187. *Sacred*—qualifies "poet's grave" rather than "poet."

188. *Mourn*—(in the subjunctive mood) agreeing with *river*.

Its latest nursling—meaning Byron.

Fled, who is (*i.e.*, has) fled (from Albion.)

190. *This fame*, the fame arising from his having "found a nest in thee."

Repay, give in compensation, or as an equivalent. The poet is still apostrophizing Venice.

191. *Aught thine own*, anything that is thy own, or belongs to thee.

192-3. *Though thy......soul*, although his bright spirit was rendered sad by the contemplation of thy degraded condition.

193. *Sunlike*, bright; radiant.

194. *Ghost*, that is, remembrance.

Homer, the most ancient and celebrated of the Greek poets. Nothing certain is known of his life, and some have even gone so far as to doubt that such a poet ever lived, holding that the works bearing his name are simply a collection of fragments of various old authors. The principal poems bearing the name of Homer, are *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. The epic burlesque *Batrachoyomachia* (The Battle of the Frogs and Mice) was also ascribed to him. Translations have been made of Homer, by Hobbes, Chapman, Pope, Cowper, &c. He is supposed to have lived nine centuries before Christ.

195. *Scamander*, a celebrated river of Troy. It rises at the foot of Mount Ida, and falls into the sea below Sigaeum. It receives the Simois in its course, and towards its mouth it is very muddy, and flows through marshes. The waters of the Scamander had the singular property of giving a beautiful colour to the hair or the wool of such animals as bathed in them; and from this circumstance the three goddesses, Minerva, Juno, and Venus, bathed there before they appeared before Paris to obtain the golden apple.

Wasting, going to waste; flowing uselessly.

197. *Avon*. Shakespeare was born at Stratford-upon-Avon.

198-9. *Which he imaged*, of which he was the image; which he visibly represented or embodied.

'Mid mortality, among mortals.

200. *Love*. Petrarch is noted for his sonnets which breathe the ardour of his love for his Laura.

From Petrarch's urn, from the poems of the dead Petrarch.

Petrarch (1304—1374), a celebrated Italian poet. On account of the dissensions which raged in his native country, his father, a notary, who belonged to the same faction as Dante, removed with him to Avignon, and afterwards to Carpenteras, where Petrarch began his education, which was completed at Montpelier and Bologna. He was intended for the law, but after the death of his father, devoted himself to the study of classical literature, and returned to Avignon, where, in 1327, he saw a young lady in church, and fell deeply in love with her. The name of the lady was Laura de Noves: she was nineteen years of age at the time, and was the wife of Hugues de Sade, a gentleman at Avignon. She was a lady of unimpeachable virtue, and firmly repelled his advances. After struggling in vain to overcome his passion, he retired to Vaucluse, a romantic spot, where he poured out his amorous complaints in several pieces. He afterwards travelled in different countries; but with his return to Vaucluse his passion for Laura returned. Again he celebrated her charms, and the delights of his retreat. His name became famous; and he received invitations from the senate of Rome, from the king of Naples, and the university of Paris. He accepted the first, and on Easter-day, 1341, he was crowned with laurel in the Capital, with great pomp. In 1348 he received the news of the death of Laura. He was then at Parma; but immediately set out for Vaucluse, where he passed some time in grief. In 1352 he returned to Italy, and at Padua, obtained a canonry; but many years of his life were spent in accepting invitations to the courts of the Pope and other great Italian potentates. At last in 1370, he removed to Arqua, a little village prettily situated among the Euganean Hills, where he spent his closing years in hard scholarly work, much annoyed by visitors, troubled with epileptic fits, not over rich, but serene in heart, and displaying in his life and correspondence a rational and beautiful piety. He was found dead in his library on the morning of the 18th July 1374, his head propped on a book.

Urn, a vessel of various forms which was used for various purposes by the ancient Greeks and Romans, one of which was the preservation of the ashes of the dead after cremation. Urns used for this purpose were called *cinerary* urns.

201. *Amid yon hills.* Petrarch lived during the closing years of his life at Arqua, a village among the Euganean Hills, and died there.

Burn, that is, stir up the hearts of his countrymen.

203. *Unearthly*, not belonging to earth; spiritual.

So thou art. *So* is correlative to *as* in ll. 194, 196 and 200. The poet apostrophizes Byron, whose remembrance he says will cling to Venice as that of Homer does to the Scamander, of Shakespeare to the Avon, and of Petrarch to the hills about Arqua.

204. *The city......thee*—Venice : see note on ll. 147-5.

207. *Thought-winged*, diffusing itself with the rapidity of thought.

208. *Universal light*, light shining upon everything.

209. *Seems to......height*, makes the plain and the mountain seem on the same level.

210. *From the......spread*, a mist rising from the sea has over-spread the land.

211. *Dead*, shorn of their splendour (being seen through the mist).

213. *Like its glory*, as its glory lay dead.

214. *Skirts*, borders.

215. *Many-domed.* The houses of Padua are in general lofty and well-bulit, and several of the public edifices are of magnificent architecture. The municipal palace is an immense building supported by galleries resting on marble pillars. The roof is said to be the largest, unsupported by pillars, in the world. The Cape Redrocchi in the Prato della Valle, is esteemed to be one of the finest edifices in Italy. It occupies the site of a Roman edifice, the marbles of which form the pavement of the chief court. The churches, monasteries, and convents are numerous. The Duomo, cathedral, the church of Sant Antonio, remarkable for its splendid interior decorations, and the churches of San Giorgio and Santa Giustina (both highly decorated and adorned with pictures and sculpture), are among the finest of the ecclesiastical edifices. The

Baptistery is a fine Lombard building of the twelfth century. The university founded in the thirteenth century, was at one time, celebrated throughout Europe. Its buildings may be classed among the finest of the kind, and include a museum and fine library.

Proud, splendid.

216. *A peopled solitude*, an inhabited city standing by itself and far from other inhabited places.

217. *Harvest shining*, bright with corn ready for the harvest.

219. *Garner*, granary, or storehouse for grain.

His foe, that is, the foreigner who owns the fields.

221. *Vintage*, harvested grapes.

Strain, move with great effort.

222. *Creaking*—under the weight of the grapes.

223. *The brutal Celt.* Shelley means the Austrians; but he makes an ethnological error. The Austrians belong to the Teutonic, not the Celtic, race.

223-4. *Swill drunken sleep*, drink himself into insensibility and sleep. The Austrians are addictad to deep drinking. In the Talisman, Scott makes Richard speak of the Archduke of Austria as a "Teutonic wineskin."

With savage will, with the brutal determination of getting drunk.

225-6. *The sickle......unshanged*, the people do not throw away the sickle and take up the sword to drive out their conquerors, and make their country free.

227. *Whose shade is poison*, whose very shade is poisonous.

228. *Overgrows... foison*, spreads like weeds over this fertile region. The word is suggested by the comparison of the Austrian lords to weeds: the region is overgrown with them as it were, and they exhaust its produce as poisonous weeds make the ground they grow on, barren.

Foison, plenty or abundance—an obsolete word.

229-30. *Sheaves of......home*, who are ready to come in numbers to reap the harvast of the battle-field.

Rife, active ; prompt—an obsolete use of the word.

230. *Harvest-home*, the feast made at gathering of the harvest.

231. *Men must......sow* Cf. *Galatians*, VI, 7 : "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

232. *Force......flow*, violence must always produce or lead to violence.

234. *Love*—of one's fellowmen.

238. *Son and Mother*. Milton in *Paradise Lost*, II, makes Death the Son of Sin by her own father Satan. St. James says : "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin ; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (*James*, I, 15).

238-9. *Death and Sin......Ezzelin*, that is, it became a question whether Ezzelin should die or pursue his wicked career.

239. *Ezzelin*, Eccelino da Bomano, who, about the middle of the thirteenth century, made himself lord of Padua, Vicenza, and Verona with the help of the Emperor of Germany, and raised in the North-East of Italy a rival power to the Lombard League. He greatly oppressed the cities which were under his power, and made the citizens serve in his army. In 1254, the Florentines took Volterra and Siena, and humbled Pisa. But Eccelino still tyrannized in the Veronese march, ruling almost as a sovereign, and his cruelties were imitated by his brother Alberigo in Treviso. Milan, which might have checked them, was torn by feuds between the nobles and people. At last a crusade was preached against Eccelino by the Bishop elect of Ravenna, legate of Alexander the Fourth. A great number were enlisted at Venice, both those who had fled from the tyrant's cruelty, and many citizens of the Republic, which was endangered by Eccelino's great power. The crusading army took Padua, but for a time the war was ineffectual. In 1259 Eccelino crossed the Adda, hoping to be joined by the Milanese nobles. He was met by an army composed not only of Guelphs, but even of Ghibelins ; he was defeated, wounded, and taken. In prison he tore the bandages from off his wounds, and so died.

240. *Till Death......win!* till death put an end to his atrociously wicked career.

241. *To lose*, at losing.

243. *Petition*—that is, petition the devil, we suppose.

244. *For her...... Emperor*, that she should rule the land as the representative of the Emperor; that the country should be given up to wickedness.

245. *When the......o'er*, when the appointed time should come.

246-8. *Over all......Austrian*, that is, over Lombardy and Venice.

247. *The eastern Alpine snow*, that is, the Alps on the north-eastern boundary of Italy.

251. *From shore to shore*, from the shores of the Gulf of Genoa to those of the Adriatic Sea. The poet means that the whole country was given up to wickedness and courage.

252. *That incestuous pair.* Shelley is probably thinking of Milton's making Sin bring forth a monstrous brood as the result of the incestuous intercourse between Sin and her own son Death.

253. *As the sun the swallow*, as the swallow follows the sun, that is, flies westwards. The return of the swallow to Europe in spring is referred to.

256-7. *In thine...burning*, thou art no more distinguished for thy learning. The University of Padua, founded in 1228, was one of the most celebrated in Europe during the Middle Ages.

259. *The grave of day*, darkness. The meteor referred to is the will-o—the-wisp, which is often seen over graves, and which misleads travellers.

262. *Flame*—of the lamp of learning.

263-4. *When it......earth*, when few other countries of the world were enlightened by learning.

265-6. *New fires......might*, that is, learning is revived with great vigour throughout the world.

270. *Piny*, overgrown with pine or fir.

274. *Thus lowly born*, originating in that small flame

281. *Light*, the light of freedom.

282. *Fearest*, art terrified by the growth of the spirit of freedom, which will destroy thy despotic power.

284. *Purple*—referring to the purple robe which was the distinguishing dress of the Roman emperors, and the sign of imperial power.

288. *Vaporous*, reduced to the form of vapour; dissolved into vapour.

Amethyst, a kind of quartz of a bluish violet colour of different degrees of intensity. It generally occurs crystallized in hexahedral prisms terminated by corresponding pyramids; also in rolled fragments composed of prismatic crystals. It is wrought into various articles of jewellery.

289. *Air-dissolved*, dissolved into air.

291. *Curved*. The horizon is a *circle*.

292. *The point......profound*, that is, the zenith.

Profound, depth.

293. *Fills the overflowing sky*, fills the sky so as to make it overflow with the mist. *Overflowing* is a proleptic or anticipative epithet.

295. *Leaves*,—a nominative absolute.

Unsodden, not soaked with moisture.

296. *Infant frost*, early frost.

297. *With......feet*, that is, in the morning. *Print*, footprint footmark. *Gleaming*—in the congealed dew.

300. *Trellised*, forming a trellis or lattice-work. Or the meaning may be "trained on trellises or frames of latticework."

301. *Dark-skirted*, having a dark skirt, fringe, or border.

302. *Dun*, of a dull brown colour.

Bladed grass, grass having blades.

303. *Pointing*, standing with the blades pointing upwards.

306. *Olive-sandalled*, with olive trees growing around its base. A sandal is a kind of shoe.

307. *Dimly islanded* surrounded by a dim haze.

312. *Darkened*, gave a character of sadness to.

313. *Interpenetrated*, penetrated through and through; thoroughly pervaded.

Lie—agreeing with *plains* (l. 294), *vines* (l. 299), &c.

315. *Be it*, whether it be.

316. *The soul of all*, something which constitutes the essence of all of them.

318. *Feeds*, supplies the ideas and sentiments which sustain.

319. *Peopling*, filling with inhabitants of its own creation.

322. *Infantine moon*, new or crescent moon.

323. *That one star.* The crescent moon is often seen with a single star above and close to it, the two together forming a very beautiful sight.

To her, to the moon. *Minister*, supply; give.

325. *She*, the star.

326. *From the......springs*—because the star has come up from below the horizon soon after the sun sank below it, so that the star seems to have derived its light from the sun.

Radiant springs, springs of radiance, or sources of light.

327. *Soft*, soothing. *Dreams*, reveries or musings.

329. *That silent isle.* He means the part of his life which his morning musings had recalled (ll. 174-8).

331. *Bark*—governed by *had borne* (l. 328).

333-4. *Its ancient......again*, I begin to feel again all my old misery.

337-8. *Other spirits......gulf.* He means that there must be others in the world enduring misery like himself.

339. *Rock......wraps*, rock which the wild wave wraps or covers.

342. *Glooming*, filled with dim light; dim.

344. *May......built*, a windless bower may be built.

Windless, not exposed to (stormy) winds.

346. *Lawny*, having lawns, or open grassy spaces, on their sides.

347. *Sea-murmur*, low murmuring sounds of the waves.

355. *Healing paradise*, happy region which cures the wounds of the soul.

Paradise is a word of Persian origin, and means a garden, orchard, or other enclosed place, filled with objects fitted to regale the senses. Hence it is used figuratively for any place of peculiar happiness, and particularly for the kingdom of perfect happiness which is the abode of the blessed beyond the grave.

356. *Polluting*, infecting the pure with the impurity of their own minds.

359. *Rain*, drop.

Balm, anything which heals, or which soothes or mitigates pain.

360-61. *Leaves......heaves.* We do not understand how the sea heaves *under* the leaves. Perhaps the reference is only to the trees standing at a higher level than the sea.

362. *Interval*—governed by *supplies*.

363. *Their*—refers to *leaves*.

367. *Circling*, surrounding.

370. *They, not it, would change*, they would change but it would not change. There ought to be a comma after *it*.

ODE TO A SKYLARK.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

This Ode was written in 1820. "In sweetness," says Leigh Hunt, "and not even there in passages, the *Ode to the Skylark* is inferior only to Coleridge—in rapturous passion to no man. It is like the bird it sings—enchanting, profuse, continuous, and alone—small, but filling the heavens."

The skylark is a small bird (found in Europe and parts of Asia) which is noted for the sweetness of its cheerful song, which it pours forth whilst soaring and floating in the air. Very early in the morning, long before sunrise, the male bird soars aloft, and sings there as if inviting its mate to leave its nest, and join him up in the air. It commences its song early in the spring, continuing it during the whole summer, and is one of the few birds that chant while on the wing. When it first rises from the earth, its notes are feeble and interrupted; as it ascends, however, they gradually swell to their full tone, and long after the bird has reached a height where it is lost to the eye, it still continues to charm the ear with its melody. It mounts almost perpendicularly, and by successive springs, and descends in an oblique direction, unless when threatened with danger, when it drops like a stone.

1. *Spirit.* As Hutton remarks, Shelley will not recognise the Skylark's earthly form or abode at all; to him it is not a bird whose nest is on the ground; it is a winged desire, always rising, aspiring, singing, "like an unbodied joy, whose race is just begun."

2. *Wert.* "There is no necessity for regarding *wert* as exclusively a subjunctive form. In Anglo-Saxon the form was *wære*. '*Thou were*' is found in early English writers. *Wert* is formed after the analogy of *wilt* and *shalt*. The form *wast* did not appear in English before the fourteenth century, and was preceded by *was* (*thou was*). *Wast* is used by Wycliffe. *Wert*, as a subjunctive form, belongs only to modern English." (*Mason*).

4 *From heaven or near it.* See the Introductory Note, para. 2.

5. *Unpremeditated art*, extemporized or spontaneous song.

8. *Like a cloud of fire.* The comparison seems to be to a flame enveloped in smoke, shot forth from a body on fire, as a burning house or haystack.

9. *The blue deep*, the blue sky, or rather the ocean of air with the blue sky above it.

Wingest, flies rapidly through.

11. *Golden lightning*, flash of yellow light.

12. *The sunken sun*, the sun which has sunk below the horizon.

14. *Float and run*, sail swiftly.

15. *Unbodied joy.* See footnote on p. x of the Introduction.

16. *Even*, evening.

17. *Melts ...... flight*, dissolves into darkness around thee as thou fliest.

18. *Like a star of heaven*, as a star is invisible in the broad daylight.

19-20. *In the ...... unseen.* The lark is high up in the sky by the time it is broad daylight, and is therefore invisible: see para. 2 of the Introductory Note.

20. *Shrill delight*, shrill, joyous song.

21. *Keen*—qualifies *delight*.

Arrows, that is, beams.

22. *That silver sphere*, a silvery star of heaven.

23. *Intense lamp*, intensely bright light.

Narrows, contracts; becomes less.

27. *Is loud*, resounds loudly.

28. *Night is bare*, the sky is cloudless at night.

30. *Rains*, pours in a flood.

32. *What is ...... thee?* To what may we most appropriately compare thee?

36-7. *Hidden ...... thought*, unnoticed on account of the very brightness of his thoughts which prevents the world from perceiving them.

38. *Unbidden*, spontaneously.

39-40. *Wrought to sympathy*, gradually brought into a state of sympathy.

40. *It heeded not*, he did not at first care for.

43. *Love-laden*, heavy with love; full to oppression, with love.

46. *Glow-worm*, an insect the female of which, which is wingless, emits in the night time a shining green light from the extremity of the abdomen. The male is winged, and is supposed to be attracted by the light of the female.

Golden, emitting a golden light.

47. *Dell of dew*, dewy dell, or small retired valley.

48-9. *Scattering its aerial hue*, shedding its coloured light on the air. *Aerial* seems to mean "prevading the air."

48. *Unbeholden*, hidden from view.

51. *Embowered in*, sheltered by; nestling amidst.

53. *Deflowered*, that is, deprived of its fragrance (by being made to give it forth).

55. *Makes faint ...... thieves*, makes the air motionless as if in a swoon, being heavy with perfume. Compare Tennyson's *Lotos-Eaters*, 5: "*All* round the coast, the languid air did *swoon*."

Sweet, sweet odour, perfume.

Heavy-winged thieves, that is, the winds which are heavy with the perfume which they steal from the flowers.

56. *Sound*—governed by *doth surpass* in l. 60.

Vernal showers, spring showers (which fall softly).

57. *Twinkling*—with the rain drops.

58. *Rain-awakened*, awakened or roused by the rain.

65. *Panted*, gasped; breathed with rapid throbs.

66. *Chorus Hymenæal*, marriage song sung by a number of persons. Hymen was the Greek god of marriage, represented as a son of Bacchus and Venus, or of Apollo and one of the Muses.

67. *Triumphal chaunt*, song of victory.

68. *Matched with thine*, compared with thy song.

71-2. *The fountains ...... strain*, the springs or sources of thy joyous song, that is, the objects or the feelings that inspire it.

76. *Joyance*, joyousness; delight.

77. *Be with*, co-exist with.

80. *Satiety*, an excess of gratification which excites wearisomeness or loathing.

81-2. *Of death ...... things*, must have conceptions regarding death.

85. *Crystal*, clear and bright; pure and joyous.

86. *Before and after*, back to the past, and forward to the future.

88. *Fraught*, laden.

95. *Joy*—governed by *near*.

96. *Measures*, metres; airs or tunes.

101. *Scorner of the ground*—because the lark always sings *high up in the air*.

103. *Harmonious madness*, maddening harmony; ravishing music.

THE SENSITIVE PLANT.

This plant exhibits certain movements induced by accidental external stimuli, such as a breath of wind, the falling of a shadow, offensive vapours, or the most delicate touch, which irritate the leaflets, causing them to drop suddenly, and closely overlap each other along the leaf-stalk, which then drops also. As soon as the cause is removed the plant recovers, and its parts revive and assume their natural position. *Mimosa Sensitiva* also exhibits irritability of the leaves in a marked degree. These plants are natives only of tropical climates, such as Brazil and India.

The Sensitive Plant.—The term is commonly restricted to a species of *Mimosa* called *Mimosa Pudica.*

2. *Silver dew.*—Other poets—Scott for example, has compared the dew on plants to diamonds.

3. *Fan-like leaves.*—The leaves are shaped like tiny fans. The sensitive plant is very common in certain localities.

4. *The kisses, &c.*—Night is represented, poetically, as kissing the leaves of the plant and thus sending it to sleep.

5. *The spring.*—The season of spring. *The Spirit of Love.* "In the spring," says another poet, "a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love."

7. *Herb.*—The 'h' is silent in this word. We have now taken to sounding it, but the poet lived when it was, by every one, treated as a silent letter.

8. *Rose from the dreams.*—Sprang into life again. We have no spring in India. The nearest approach to it is the marvellous transformation produced by a few days of heavy monsoon rain.

12. *Companionless.*—It seems to avoid the neighbourhood of other plants.

13. *Snow-drop...violet.*—Two of the loveliest and sweetest of English flowers.

16. *Like the voice, &c.*—Just as after an April shower the scent of the upturned earth mingled with the odour of lilies and violets is so delicious, all its sweetness being drawn forth by the rain from heaven, that it can only be compared to the lovely vibrations in the air, produced by a perfectly harmonious voice and sweet stringed instrument in perfect tune. On a poet the sweet scents of nature, and harmony produce the same effect.

17. *Pied wind-flowers.*—Variegated anemones.

18. *Narcissi.*—This refers to the flower commonly known as the 'poets' narcissus—which has white flowers, the corona having a coloured border. This is the flower into which in classical mythology Narcissus is said to have been changed.

19. *The streams recess.*—A still backwater of the river, in which the narcissi are represented as being reflected and gazing at their own beauties. This refers to the well-known classical story.

The nymph Echo fell in love with Narcissus who did not return her love. Nemesis pursued him, and he was condemned to gaze in the fountain frequented by these nymphs until he pined away, and was changed into the flower which bears his name.

21. *Naiad-like.*—The Naiads (Greek mythology) were the nymphs of fountains and streams. The poet compares the beautiful white lily of the valley to a Naiad.

23. *Tremulous bells.*—These lilies have small bell-like and pure white flowers which tremble in the wind amongst their green leaves —"their pavilions of tender green." (24)

25—28. Another beautiful bell-like flower, the hyacinth, of which there are three well-known varieties "purple and white and blue" is represented as producing the musical effect of a peal of bells. This effect is perceived by us as a "delicate, soft and intense" odour.

29. *To the bath addrest.*—Prepared for her bath.

31. *To the fainting air.*—The air is poetically represented as feeling faint with desire to embrace the adorable rose.

33. *Wand-like lily.*—Another kind of lily having a straight upright stem on the top of which its pale white flower is borne.

34. *A Mænad.*—A Bacchante, a kind of frenzied nymph of the woods.

37. *The jessamine...the tuberose.*—Both these flowers flourish in Southern India. 'Faint' referring to the faint odour of the jessamine.

40. *In perfect prime.*—In perfection.

41. *Inconstant.*—Unsteady.

42. *Prankt.*—Adorned.

42—44. *Boughs of embowering blossom, &c.*—That is, the stream glided on under over-arching boughs covered with flowers, all tangled together. These made a kind of particoloured heaven above the stream, and the sun shining through the tangled mass produced a "golden and green light."

45. *Tremulously.*—The motion of the stream made the lilies tremble.

46. *River-buds.*—Little flowers growing just by the edge of the stream.

By.—Along side. There is no motion implied in this word as used in the text. In such a phrase as 'he passed swiftly *by*' there is motion.

48. *Radiance.*—Objective case. Supply 'with' before it. The shining of the sun on the water produces 'radiance.'

49. *Sinuous.*—Winding, the word is usually applied to the motion of snakes.

51. *Some.*—Of the paths, that is.

53. *All paved.*—Quite covered.

54. *The fabulous asphodels.*—Called 'fabulous' because they are so often spoken of by the classical poets. "It is said that the spirits of the dead sustain themselves with the roots of the asphodel. It was planted by the ancients on graves, and both Theophilus and Pliny state that the ghosts (spirits) beyond Acheron (the river of hell) roam through meadows of asphodel in order, if possible, to reach the waters of Lethe, or Oblivion. The asphodel was dedicated to Pluto, the god of Hades (hell)."

56. *Fell into pavilions.*—The flowers drooped their heads forming as it were little tents to protect the glow-worm from getting wetted by the dews of evening.

57. *To roof.*—To form a roof over, to protect.

53—57. This stanza is irregular and contains five lines.

58. *Undefiled.*—In which everything was pure.

Scan—

And from this | undefi | led Par | adise.

Two are Anapæsts and two Iambuses.

62. *Blithe.*—Merry, joyous.

63. *Mine-lamps.*—Lamps in a mine disclose a hidden gem by causing it to sparkle.

64. *Shone.*—The subject of this verb is 'flowers' in line 59.

66. *Interpenetrated.*—Thoroughly permeated.

69. *Wrapped, &c.*—Absorbed in one another.

70. *Could give small fruit, &c.*—Could not express its love by beautiful flowers, and a sweet odour. See lines 74-75.

73. *None wanted, &c.*—This line seems to me incomprehensible 'could belong' has apparently no subject.

78. *Unsustaining wings.*—Having no force in them to keep them up, as in a storm.

80-81. *The beams, &c.*—The poet represents the flowers of many hues as darting their beams afar.

82-83. *The plumed insects.*—The butterfly for example—whose wings are covered with what resemble the tiniest feathers. The reference is to a yellow butterfly very common at certain seasons.

84. *And odour.*—This is the poet's imagination.

86—89. It may be quite possible to grasp the idea the poet wishes to convey and at the same time impossible to put that idea into plain prose. These lines are an example in point.

90—93. *The quivering vapours, &c.*—Every one must have seen the kind of shimmer in the air, here referred to.

96. *The lagging hours.*—The slow-moving hours.

105. *Paves it.*—Covers the floor of the ocean.

Consciousness.—This is, the poet we think means, at the root of all dreaming.

107. *Ever sung, &c.*—Increased the sweetness of its song in proportion as the daylight failed more and more.

108. *Elysian.*—Such as is heard in paradise. 'Elysium' is the paradise or happy fields of the Greek poets.

111. *Up-gathered, &c.*—Of all the plants the first to close its leaves and show that for it the day was over was the Sensitive Plant.

PART II.

116. *An Eve in this Eden.*—A beautiful woman, like Eve, who lived in this beautiful garden, resembling the garden of Eden.

Grace.—Gracious presence.

118. *The starry scheme.*—The universe, with the sun, moon and stars.

119. *The wonder, &c.*—A wonder of beauty. Her lovely mind was, as it were, reflected in a perfect form.

123. *Tended.*—Attended to, cared for.

124. *Meteors.*—Metaphorical for the bright coloured flowers.

That sublunar heaven.—That beautiful garden full of stars, that is, bright and brilliant flowers.

125. *The lamps of the air.* The stars.

129. When the daylight awoke her.

130. That her dreams were full of happiness.

134. *Though the veil.*—Though the brightness of the sun prevented her seeing the spirit-form.

138. *Passion.*—Passionate feelings of love.

141. Her very long hair trailed behind her and blotted out the marks left by her very light footstep.

146. *From her glowing fingers.*—The idea is that the flowers, as if they were sentient beings, felt thrilled at the touch of her warm and lovely fingers.

148—150. *Those that were faint.*—Any flowers that drooped in the heat of the sun she watered. Any flowers that were water-clogged from rain she emptied of water.

151. *Their heads.*—The heads of the flowers.

152. *Sustained.*—Supported. *Osier.*—Willow.

155. *All killing insects, &c.*—All insects, &c., that killed her flowers she carefully removed from her garden, but so tender-hearted was she that she would not kill *them*, but carried them away to the woods (or as we might say in India, 'the jungle,') near by and there deposited them.

163. *Ephemeris.*—Ephemera would, perhaps, be the most accurate word. In Greek *Ephemeris* means a 'diary'—whereas *Ephemera* means 'flies' that last *for a day*.

166. *Be.*—Infinitive depending on 'make.'

167. *An antenatal tomb.*—A periphrasis for a 'chrysalis'—the gold-coloured sheath of butterflies.

174. *Ere the first leaf looked brown.*—She died at the end of the summer before the leaves began to asume their autumn tints.

PART III.

176. *Like stars...........were.*—The subject of 'were' is flowers in l. 175.

The light of the Moon blots out the light of the stars. The stars are very bright till the moon rises.

177. *The Baiæ.*—Take out 'the' is a misprint. Baiæ is an old town—now in ruins—situated near Naples. The waves which lave the shore round Baiæ glitter before the bright moon appears.

178. *She.*—The Moon.

179. *Forth.*—Read *Fourth.*

180. *Felt.*—The Sensitive Plant is, as has been explained, susceptible to sounds and smells of all kinds and instantly closes its leaves.

188. *Bright with tears.*—The tears of the mourning crowd.

190. *Sate in the pines.*—The wind is represented as being in the pinetrees, and uttering mournful sounds in response to those of the crowd of mourners.

196. *Through*.—This should be 'though.'

197. *Frost, &c.*—That is, it was cold and frosty until nearly midday.

199. *Mocking the spoil, &c.*—As if in mockery of the destruction wrought by the frost at night.

201. *Paved the turf.*—Covered the grass all over.

Below.—That is, below the rose bush.

203. *Like the head.*—This is a repulsive simile.

204. *The Indian plants*—Such as the jasmine and tuberose.

207. *Were massed into.*—The leaves fell off the plants and were gradually worked into the ground.

210. *On the dry wind past.*—The cold dry gusts of wind whirled masses of leaves of all colours into the air.

212. *Winged seeds.*—Many seeds are formed by nature to fly on the wind and thus get planted far and wide.

214. Masses of these seeds driven along by the wind accumulated round the stems of many of the sweetest flowers in the garden—both rotted into mould together.

216. *Water-blooms.*—Water-lilies of various kinds.

219. *Those.*—The blooms of the flowers that grew on land.

221. *The walk.*—This should be plural to rhyme with 'stalks.' The paths in the garden.

222. *Parasite.*—A 'parasite' is a plant that exists by clinging to other plants—creepers are all parasitic flowers, and arched walks in a garden are usually covered with creepers. When autumn comes their leaves fall off and there is nothing left but a mass of intertwined stems and tendrils.

225. *All loathliest.*—Every kind of the most disgusting weeds (see the next stanza) thistles, nettles, &c.

227. Both of which are speckled black and yellow.

229. *Dank.*—A differentiated form of damp.

231. *The air till the dead wind sank.*—Until the still air grew heavy and foul smelling.

232. *Loath.*—Disgusted.

234. *Pulpous.*—Full of pulp.

235. *Starred with.*—Having glittering drops of due on them of a reddish yellow.

236. *Agarics and fungi.*—Toadstools and all sorts of poisonous growths,—some of which closely resemble the wholesome mushroom.

239. *Animated.*—This word has the stress thrown on the last syllable, in order to rhyme with 'dead' in the previous line.

241. *Dumb.*—Silent. The stream was so choked with weeds and green shining matter that it could only move very slowly, and no longer made a pleasant murmuring sound as it is represented as doing in l. 48.

242. *Flags.*—A 'flag' is a kind of water-reed.

245. *The vapours, &c.*—Poisonous vapours full of fever germs.

246. The poisonous vapours rose in the morning like a mist.

They were felt.—The poisonous effects of the vapours were felt.

248. *Unctuous meteors.* Rays of sickly light.

249. *Fitted.*—A misprint for 'flitted.'

252. *Like one forbid.*—Like a child who has been forbidden to do a thing.

254—7. *Grew together.*—The effect on the Sensitive Plant of all the abominable smells and poisonous dews was to close its leaves up and prevent them from reopening, so that the plant soon died.

261. *Chappy finger.*—In the winter the hands become chapped with the severe cold. Winter is personified and his own chappy (or chapped) finger is represented as being put to his lip—imposing silence on the cataracts and streams—which at his will became ice-bound.

262-5. The winter had frozen the cataracts—making long icicles of the spray. The whole earth was, as it were, bound in chains (of ice.)

266. *He.*—Winter, personified.

267. *The tenfold blasts.*—The very fierce and icy winds from the arctic regions.

268. *Then.*—In the depths of winter the weeds died, or at any rate disappeared into the earth.

269. *From frost.*—From the cold of winter.

274. *Dropped stiff.*—In very severe winters in Europe birds have been known to drop down dead, frozen to death.

275. *Naked and bare.*—Referring to the 'branches,' not to the birds. The cold of winter strips the trees bare of their leaves and gives them a naked look.

276. *A thawing rain.*—Rain that caused the ice that has already formed to *thaw* or melt.

277. *Dull drops.*—The rain as it fell was partly frozen and made dull.

Froze on the boughs again.—But before the rain could run off the boughs it was again frozen.

Again.—There should be a colon at the end of this line.

278. *There steamed up, &c.*—The meaning is that a sort of fog arose and became frozen on the branches, forming icicles with rain-drops already frozen there.

283. *Griff.*—Grasp, grip. An obsolete word.

287. *Charnels.*—Graves, tombs.

289. *Boughs.*—The Sensitive Plant is not a tree, so the word used is not altogether an appropriate one.

292. *Whether that lady's.*—The poet says he dare not even conjective what the disembodied spirit of the dead lady felt as to the terrible change in the garden.

296-99. *This life.*—This life on earth is unreal—it is a mere chimera, or merely *maya*, a vision, as the Hindus hold it.

300. *Creed.*—Form of belief,—to suppose that death itself does not really occur, but is a mere mockery.

304—307. All the pleasant things we have been considering (in Parts i. and ii. of the Poem) still exist—have not 'passed away.' We and ours have changed, not they.

308-9. Everything that is lovely and pleasant to sight or smell permanently exists.

310-11. *Their might exceeds our organs.*—Our organs of sight and smell—our various senses—are not capable of grasping all that is in things good and delightful, because our senses are of too dull a nature and 'endure no light.'

William Wordsworth.

This great poet was born of a respectable family at Cockermouth, in Cumberland, in the year 1770. His father, who was law-agent to Lord Lonsdale, died before his son had reached his fourteenth year; while he had the misfortune to lose his mother when he was but eight years old.

His early education was carried on partly in his native place and partly at Penrith, where his mother's family lived. He was then for some years at the Grammar School of Hawkshead in Lancashire, whence he removed to St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1787, where he did not distinguish himself, the speciality of the place, mathematics, possessing no attractions for his poetical nature. He took his degree, however, after the usual time, and then resided for a year in France, taking a lively interest in its politics.

He had now to decide on his course of life. Friends wished him to join the Church or the Bar; he, himself, thought of the army, but his final choice was Poetry, to which he ever after devoted himself.

His first publication was 'Descriptive Sketches', which was followed by 'An Evening Walk,'—both in 1793. The public took no interest in either, though Coleridge perceived the indications of future eminence, and declared that, "seldom, if ever, was the emergence of an original poetical genius above the literary horizon more evidently announced." In 1795, some money was left Wordsworth, and he settled with his sister in Dorsetshire, where Coleridge visited them in 1797. They soon, however, removed into Somersetshire, to a place named Alfoxden, in order to be near Coleridge. Here the 'Lyrical Ballads' were written, and published in 1798, Coleridge's 'Ancient Mariner' appearing among the collection. "A generous provincial bookseller, Joseph Cottle, of Bristol, gave thirty guineas for the copyright of the Lyrical Ballads; he ventured on an impression of five hundred copies,

but was soon glad to dispose of the largest proportion of the five hundred at a loss, to a London bookseller. The ballads were designed by their author as an experiment to see how far a simpler kind of poetry than that in use would afford permanent interest to readers. The humblest subjects, he contended, were fit for poetry, and the language should be that 'really used by men, The fine fabric of poetic diction which generations of the tuneful tribe had been laboriously rearing, he proposed to destroy altogether. The language of humble and rustic life, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, he considered to be a more permanent and far more philosophical language than that which is frequently substituted for it by poets. The attempt of Wordsworth was either totally neglected or assailed with ridicule. The transition from the refined and sentimental school of verse with select and polished diction, to such themes as 'The Idiot Boy,' and a style of composition disfigured by colloquial plainness, and by the mixture of ludicrous images and associations with passages of tenderness and pathos, was too violent to escape ridicule or ensure general success."

In 1798, Coleridge and Wordsworth travelled together in Germany; and the next year the latter settled at Grasmere, a beautifully picturesque spot, amongst his beloved lakes and mountains, where he lived till 1808. In 1802, Wordsworth again visited France, and on his return made Mary Hutchinson his wife, a lady described by De Quincey as possessing "sweetness all but angelic, simplicity the most entire, womanly self-respect, and purity of heart speaking through all her looks, acts, and movements." In due course three sons and two daughters wera born to them.

'Poems' in two volumes was published in 1807; and two years later appeared 'The Convention of Cintra,' a political pamphlet against the Convention, which was but little read.

In 1813, the poet removed from Grasmere to Rydal Mount where he lived to the end of his days. Southey lived, not far from Wordsworth, and Coleridge often visited them, hence the name of 'The Lake School' as applied to the three.

During the year just spoken of, the poet was busy on his great philosophical poem, never completed, but of which the

Prelude which appeared after his death, and the *Excursion*, are fragments. Of the latter, Chambers says:—'In 1814 appeared the *Excursion*, a philosophical poem in blank verse, by far the noblest production of the author and containing passages of sentiment, description, and pure eloquence, not excelled by any living poet, while its spirit of enlightened humanity, and Christian benevolence—extending over all ranks of sentient and animated being imparts to the poem a peculiarly sacred and elevated character. The influence of Wordsworth on the poetry of his age has thus been as beneficial as extensive. He turned the public taste from pompous inanity to the study of man and nature; he banished the false and exaggerated style of character and emotion, which even the genius of Byron stooped to imitate; and he enlisted the sensibilities and sympathies of his intellectual brethren in favour of the most expansive and kindly philanthropy. The pleasures and graces of his muse are all simple, pure, and lasting. In working out the plan of his *Excursion*, the poet has not, however, escaped from the errors of his early poems. The incongruity or want of keeping in most of Wordsworth's production is observable in this work. The principal character is a poor Scotch pedlar, who traverses the mountain in company with the poor and is made to discourse, with clerk-like fluency,

> Of truth, of grandeur, beauty, love, and hope.

It is thus that the poet violates the conventional rules of poetry and the realities of life, for surely it is inconsistent with truth and probability that a profound moralist and dialectician should be found in such a situation. In his travels with the 'Wanderer,' the poet is introduced to a 'Solitary,' who lives secluded from the world, after a life of busy adventures and high hope, ending in disappointment and disgust. They all proceed to the house of the pastor, who, in the style of Crabbe's *Parish Register*, recounts some of the deaths and mutations that had taken place in his sequestered valley; and with a description of a visit made by the three to a neighbouring lake, the poem concludes. The *Excursion* is an unfinished work, part of a large poem,—the *Recluse*,—'having for its principal object the sensation and opinions of a poet living in retirement.' The narrative part of the *Excursion* is a mere framework, rude and unskilful, for a series of pictures of mountain

scenery, and for philosophical dissertations tending to shew how the external world is adapted to the mind of man, and good educed out of evil and suffering. The gray-haired wanderer discourses in a lofty style of moral observation on the change of life.

The picturesque parts of the *Excursion* are full of a quiet and tender beauty characteristic of the author.

By viewing man in connection with external nature, the "poet blends his metaphysics with pictures of life and scenery. To build up and strengthen the powers of the mind, in contrast with the operations of sense, was ever his object."

Wordsworth's other chief works, besides the *Excursion*, are various 'Prefaces' and 'Dissertations' explaining his poetical theory, the 'White Doe of Rylstone,' 'Laodamia,' 'Dion,' 'Ode to Lycoris,' 'Peter Bell,' the 'Waggoner,' 'Sonnets,' 'Ecclesiastical Sonnets,' 'Yarrow Re-visited,' etc.

His poems were classified by himself as—Poems referring to the period of childhood—Poems founded on the Affections—Poems of the Fancy—Poems of the Imagination, etc., which classification has been strongly objected to by some of his critics.

After the death of Southey in 1843, Wordsworth's merit was recognized by his being appointed Poet Laureate, an appointment which did credit to the Government of Sir R. Peel, and gave dignity to the office. The poet, however, was now past writing; and he died tranquilly on the 23rd April 1850.

Criticisms on Wordsworth and his claim to be ranked among great poets have been numerous. Coleride led off with the highest of all possible estimates of his friend and contemporary, placing him "nearest of all modern writers" in imaginative power "to Shakspeare and Milton." With this estimate Matthew Arnold practically agrees, nor does Morley altogether object to it.

Arnold has endeavoured in his Edition of the *Poems of Wordsworth*, "by throwing overboard much poetical baggage," to rescue all that is finest in him from neglect and oblivion.

Amidst vast "afflictive tracts" of poetry there is to be found in Wordsworth some of the finest and purest poetry in the English or any other language. 'The highest is the measure of the man,' and of the Poet.

We refer students to the two following criticisms as being the best and most unbiassed to be found :—

Matthew Arnold's preface to the *Poems of Wordsworth*, 1879—republished in 'Essays in Criticism,' Second Series, (Macmillan's Colonial Library), and John Morely's introduction to Wordsworth's *Complete Poetical Works*, 1888, also republished in 'Studies in Literature' (Macmillan's Colonial Library,)—both which books are readily accessible, and will be found inmost College libraries.

Ode on Immortality.

"Odes, in English, have a character quite different from that which obtained in classical times, when the famous works of Pindar were accepted as a model. Pindaric odes are known in English literature, but they are few in number and not always successful. With us an ode has come to mean simply a poetical address or apostrophe, full of varying lengths and metres, and divided into so many irregular stanzas, no attempt being made to regulate the latter as Pindar regulated them. Among the best known English odes may be named Dryden's *Song on St. Cecilia's Day*, and *Alexander's Feast*; Collins's *Odes on the Passions*; Gray's *The Bard* and *The Progress of Poesy*; Tennyson's *Ode on the Duke of Wellington*; Wordsworth's *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*, perhaps the sublimest of all."

This Ode "is a poetical rendering of the famous doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul, a belief common in the East, but in European thought associated especially with the name of Plato. The doctrine implies that human souls were in existence, possibly in a higher and better state, before they became united with the bodies to which they are in this life attached. Hence the child has a sense of nearness to the spiritual world, which recedes and grows dim as he advances to manhood; and hence, too, much of the best knowledge that a man attains to is but 'recollection' of truths known by the soul in its pre-existent state, or, in the Christian form of the doctrine, of the spiritual light of that heavenly home which at birth we forsook, and to which at death we shall return."—*Chambers.*

There is little doubt that this Ode was suggested by a short poem by Henry Vaughan (poet and devotional writer 1621—1695), entitled *Silex Scintillans*, which we quote below :—

THE RETREAT.

"Happy those early days, when I
Shined in my Angel-infancy!
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy aught
But a white, celestial thought;
When yet I had not walked about
A mile or two from my first Love,
And looking back, at that short space,
Could see a glimpse of his bright face;
When on some gilded cloud or flower
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
And in their weaker glory spy
Some shadows of eternity;
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My conscience with a sinful sound,
Or had the black art to dispense
A several sin to every sense,
But felt through all this fleshy dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.
O! how I long to travel back,
And tread again that ancient track!
That I might once more reach that plain,
Where first I left my glorious train;
From whence the enlightened spirit sees
That shady City of Palm trees.
But ah! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way!
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move;
And when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came, return."

The following remarks about the Ode are from the poet's own writings:—"This was composed during my residence at Town-end, Grasmere. Two years at least passed between the writing of the first four stanzas and the remaining part. To the attentive and competent reader the whole sufficiently explains itself, but

there may be no harm in adverting here to particular feelings or experiences of my own mind on which the structure of the poem partly rests. Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. I have said elsewhere

> " ——— ———A simple child
> That lightly draws its breath,
> And feels its life in every limb,
> What should it know of death ?"

But it was not so much from the source of animal vivacity that my difficulty came, as from a sense of the indomitableness of the spirit within me.

I used to brood over the stories of Enoch, and Elijah, and almost persuade myself that whatever might become of others, I should be translated in something of the same way to heaven. With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality. At that time I was afraid of mere processes. In later periods of life I have deplored, as we have all reason to do, a subjugation of an opposite character, and have rejoiced over the remembrances, as is expressed in the lines *Obstinate Questionings*, etc. To that dream-like vividness and splendour, which invests objects of sight in childhood, every one, I believe, if he would look back, could bear testimony and I need not dwell upon it here ; but having in the poem regarded it as presumptive evidence of a prior state of existence, I think it right to protest against a conclusion, which has given pain to some good and pious persons, that I meant to inculcate such a belief. It is far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith as more than an element in our instincts of immortality. But let us bear in mind that, though the idea is not advanced in Revelation, there is nothing there to contradict it, and the Fall of Man presents an analogy in its favour. Accordingly, a pre-existent state has entered into the popular creeds of many nations, and among all persons acquainted with classic literature is known as an ingredi

ent in Platonic philosophy. Archimedes said that he could move the world if he had a point whereon to rest his machine. Who has not felt the same aspirations as regards the world of his own mind? Having to yield some of its elements when I was impelled to write this poem on the immortality of the Soul, I took hold of the notion of pre-existence as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorising me to make for my purpose the best of it I could as poet."

To the Hindu student, or at any rate to the Hindu student who knows anything of his own religion and philosophy, this Ode ought to be specially interesting, as it is based on a theory, which, if argued out to its legitimate conclusions, must land us in the doctrine of metempsy-chosis or transmigration, or more properly re-incarnation—the *punarjanmam* of the Hindus. A full analysis of the poem will be found at the end of these notes; but the following brief analysis by Mr. Hawes Turner will be of some use in enabling the student to trace the connexion of ideas, and form a general idea of the poem :—

"**Stanzas I—IV.** In early childhood all nature seemed resplendent. Now in manhood, though all around me laughs, I feel the glory faded. I try to sympathise with the universal joy, but the very fields remind me of my loss.

Stanza V. This feeling is accounted for. We existed before our birth into this world. We are come from God, and thus in infancy we bear in us most clearly the traces of our heavenly origin, traces which fade before advancing manhood.

Stanzas VI—VIII. All things of earth tend to make us forget our former state. Even the infant, forgetful of his high descent and calling, imitates the occupations of his elders and seeks to anticipate the bonds of custom.

Stanza IX. Yet all is not lost. There yet remain some records of our heavenly childhood; not only the memory of its innocence and freedom, but that feeling of the unreality of an external world which comes back upon us in our highest moods, and tells us of our spiritual origin.

Stanza X—XI. Therefore can I still rejoice in Nature; for though I see no more the vivid splendours of my childhood, the loss is more than compensated by the human sympathies of riper years, through which I see new and nobler meanings in the beauty of the humblest flower."

In the original edition of the Ode, Wordsworth prefixed to it as a motto the following lines from one of his own earlier and shorter poems :—

"The child is father of the man,
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety."

The simple meaning of which lines is: "What we are when children, we continue to be when men; and I should greatly wish that however old I may grow, I may always have the same reverence for, and delight in, nature that I had as a child, so that, in that respect at least, my life may be uniform from infancy to age."

Stanza I—2. *Common sight*, ordinary scenes of nature.

4. *Appareled in*, clothed in, invested or covered with; full of. *Celestial light*, heavenly splendour or brightness. Cf. "Thou deckest thyself with light as with a garment." Psalm civ., 2.

5. "That dream-like vividness and splendour which invests objects of sight in childhood." (*Wordsworth*. See extract in introductory notes.) *Of a dream*, which things assume in our dreams.

6. *Of yore*, in the days of long ago; in my childhood.

7. Though I turn wheresoever I may turn.

9. I cannot see things in the same way as I used to do in my childhood; *i.e.*, they do not present to my sight the same dreamy beauty and splendour that they did once.

Stanza II—10. *Comes and Goes*, appears and disappears (and delights me by its beauty). The rainbow still has a charm for the poet, but still he feels that the glory which it displays is not

the same kind of glory (*i.e.*, celestial glory) which it had in his eyes in childhood. The short poem, from which the motto of the Ode is taken, begins:

> "My heart leaps up when I behold
>   A rainbow in the sky;
> So was it when my life began;
> So is it now I am a man:
> So be it when I shall grow old,
>   Or let me die."

11. *Lovely is the rose* (but its loveliness is of a different kind from that which it once had).

12. *With delight*, as if full of joy; with a happy face.

13. *Look round her*, survey the world around her. *When the heavens are bare*, when the sky is clear and cloudless.

14. *Waters on a starry night*, waters on which the stars are reflected on a clear night.

16. The reappearance of the sun from below the horizon, as if born again out of the darkness in which it was buried, is a splendid sight.

17. That the objects of earth have lost a certain glory which invested them in my eyes when I was a child.

Stanza III—21. *As to the tabor's sound*, with movements as regular and lively as if they were dancing to the beating of a tabor. *Tabor*, a small drum.

22. *A thought of grief*, a sad reflection caused by the remembrance of what I had lost, to wit, the power of seeing in objects of nature that celestial glory which I saw in them once. *To me alone* while all animated nature seemed so happy in the joyous springtime. [Turner thinks there is an allusion here to the death of the poet's brother.]

23. I gave utterance to my sad thought, and my mind was relieved or comforted. Persons, when oppressed by sad thoughts, find relief by communicating them to others, or otherwise giving expression to them. The "timely utterance" is the expression of his sad thought in the preceding stanzas, and not the sound of the cataracts or the voice of nature.

24. *I again am strong*, I feel comforted in mind.

25. The cataracts are rushing down the precipitous rocks with a loud sound, as if rejoicing in the joyousness of the season, and inviting all nature to join in their rejoicing. The Lake country abounds in cataracts and waterfalls.

26. I shall not, by indulging my sad thoughts, place myself out of harmony with the general joy of spring-time. Spring is a season of joy, and to indulge grief in it is doing it an injustice as it were, because it mars the happiness which it brings to all nature.

27. I hear the sounds of nature multiplied and prolonged by reverberation among the mountains

28. *Come to me*, blow towards me. *From the fields of sleep*, from the fields where they have been slumbering during the night. [Hales interprets *fields of sleep*, "the yet reposeful, slumbering country-side." Turner says it means "the regions of sleep, early dawn." Chambers follows Hales: sleeping fields," which, in the early morning, "have not yet awakened as it were from their slumber." We prefer the interpretation first given.

31. *Jollity*, mirth, rejoicing.

32. *With the heart of May*, with that feeling of happiness which characterises Spring, *i.e.* with which Spring inspires all animated nature. *May* is the best part of the Spring season, and is by synecdoche used for it.

33. *Keep holding*, spend the time in rejoicing; rejoice.

34. *Child of joy*, happy child. Cf. 'Sons of liberty.' The poet is addressing a shepherd-boy, which he imagines to be present in the midst of the joyous scene.

35. *Shout round me*, give expression to your joy in shouts. *Let me hear thy shouts*, for it gives me pleasure to hear them.

Stanza IV.—36. *Ye blessed creatures.* The poet is addressing the animated creatures he has already mentioned or referred to. *The call, &c.*, as if inviting each other to join in the universal rejoicing.

38. *Laugh*, rejoice. *Jubilee*, rejoicing. *Laugh with you*, participate in your rejoicing.

39. I rejoice with you in your rejoicing.

40. *Coronal*, wreath, chaplet. At Greek and Roman banquets, the guests wore wreaths of flowers on their heads. Chambers takes *its* as referring to *festival*; but we prefer to take it as referring to *head*: "the coronal it has on such an occasion."

40—41. I not only sympathise with you in your rejoicing, but participate in it.

41. *The fulness of your bliss I feel*, I feel quite as happy as you

42. *Oh evil day!* it would be very lamentable or regrettable. *Sullen*, in a gloomy or sad mood.

43. *Herself is adorning*, is adorning herself.

44. *Morning*—accusative of time to *is adorning*.

45. *Culling*, gathering. Some editions have *pulling*. *Culling*—which is Dr. Bradshaw's reading—seems a decidedly more poetical expression than *pulling*. The object is *flowers* in l. 48.

48. *Warm*, with a greatful or agreeable warmth. *Leaps up* with pleasure, as if it also feels the general joy.

51. *But there's &c.*—The dash here indicates a sudden interruption of the train of thought the poet has been pursuing, by the recollection of what he has lost. *Of many, one*, one out of many, with which the feelings of his childhood are specially associated *But*, though I am disposed to participate in the joy of nature.

52. *A single field*, one field in which he roamed in his childhood, and which is now vividly recalled to memory by the fields before him.

53. *Something that is gone*, the celestical splendour or beauty which they had in my eyes when I was a child.

54. *Pansy*, a pretty little flower, also called heart's ease. *At my feet*, on the ground where I am standing.

55. *The same tale*, viz. that something is gone from it.

56. *Visionary gleam*, dreamy vividness and splendour: 'the glory and the freshness of a dream' of l. 5.

57. *The glory and the dream.* This is only a variation of "visionary gleam." *Dream*, dream-like beauty.

Stanza V.—This and the succeeding stanzas were written about two years after the first four. They contain an explanation of the facts mentioned in the preceding portion of the poem, viz, that all nature wears a dream-like celestial beauty and glory in our childhood, which, however, they lose when we grow older.

58. The beginning of our life in this world is not the beginning of our existence, but only the continuation of an existence which has been temporarily suspended. We existed consciously (in heaven) before we entered upon our earthly life; but that existence was interrupted, and between that interruption and our birth intervened a period of unconsciousness, like that of sleep, during which we forgot (though not altogether, l. 62) the experience of our ante-natal existence.

"This ode, and especially this and the following, are frequently called 'Platonic.' It must, however, be remembered that, although Wordsworth coincides with Plato in assigning to mankind a life previous to their human one, he differs from him in making life 'a sleep and a forgetting,' while Plato makes life a tedious process of *anamnesis* or reminding. With Wordsworth the infant, with Plato the philosopher, approaches most to the previous more glorious state."—*Turner.*

59—60. *The soul that rises with us*, the soul that begins its earthly existence at our birth. *Our life's star*, the star that rises at our birth and sets at our death. *Elsewhere*, in heaven. The metaphor is based on the fact that a star, before it rises from the horizon of one hemisphere, must have sunk below the horizon of the other. Similarly this soul must have ended its heavenly career before it commences its earthly one.

61. *From afar*, from heaven (which is generally conceived as a place far removed from the earth).

62. The soul when entering upon its earthly life, does not lose *all* recollection of its former glorious existence, but has a dim vague consciousness of it. This consciousness it is that clothes the ideas and feelings of our infancy and childhood with a dreamy splendour and vividness.

63. *Not in utter nakedness*, not without carrying with it some of its pristine glory, some of the "glory and freshness" of its heavenly existence.

64. *Trailing*, drawing along with us. *Clouds of glory*, dim or dreamy splendour. The allusion is to the soft radiance of sunrise, which gradually fades away.

65. *Who is our home*, from whom our souls emanated, and to whom they must return.

64-5. When we come into this world, we bring with us some of the glory and beauty which characterised our ideas during our heavenly existence, and we invest the objects of earth with the same glory, though in a diminished and modified form, so that the feelings and conceptions of our infancy and childhood are tinged with it to some extent; and everything appears invested with a glory not of earth.

66. In our infancy, we see the the glory of heaven investing everything we look upon.

67-8. As we grow into boyhood, things begin to lose that dreamlike splendour, and become more and more darkened or obscured by the gloom of the absorbing cares and anxieties of this earthly life—that is, our ideas begin to assume more and more of a material or earthly character, and correspondingly to lose their spiritual or heavenly nature. *Shades of the prison-house*, the gloom of this earthly existence, which is like an imprisonment of the soul, preventing its free and unrestrained movement, obscuring its natural brightness.

69. *But he beholds*. Nevertheless, he is not so completely, shut out of the light, as not to see it at all. Some part of the brightness of his earlier conceptions still remains: he has not altogether lost sight of his glorious origin. *The light*, the "dream-like splendour" of his early ideas and feelings. *Whence it flows*, the heavenly existence from which it comes to him.

70. From the ecstacy of his own mind, he infers the existence of the light which gives rise to that feeling.

71-2. *Daily farther from the East must travel*, necessarily goes further and further away from the source of that light, *i.e.*, has his conception and ideas made more and more of an earthly

nature, and less and less of a spiritual. The youth necessarily loses more and more of his original spirituality as he grows older and older. *The East*, where the sun rises; hence the source of light—here, the source of celestial light; heaven. *Nature'e Priest*, one who reverences nature, and is admitted to a knowledge (though imperfect) of her mysteries. *Still is Nature's Priest*, still retains (some of) his reverence for, and communion with Nature (and Nature's God).

73-4. And continues, as he grows up to manhood, to possess the power of perceiving and enjoying the "dream-like splendour" of his earlier days, in nature.

75-6. At last, when he has attained manhood, he sees that light gradually and perceptibly lose its ethereal brightness, till none of it is left, and what was once celestial splendour becomes nothing more than the ordinary light of the sun.

Stanza VI—77. *Fills her lap*, produces in abundance. *Pleasures of her own*, earthly or worldly pleasures for his enjoyment.

78. *Yearnings*, affectionate or tender feelings. *She*, Earth. *In her own natural kind*, of an earthly nature; of the earth, and therefore earthly. The whole line means: "She feels a natural tenderness towards him, because he has received the earthly portion of his nature from her (as he has inherited the spiritual part of it from heaven), and there is therefore a bond of affinity or kindred between him and her. [Turner's explanation of this line, accepted by Chambers, is: "Earthly things cause yearnings which earthly things can satisfy, in accordance with natural laws." What this means is not clear: the "yearnings" are clearly those felt by the earth, and what the satisfying of them has to do with her "foster-child" is difficult to understand. Besides, the explanation entirely destroys the force of *even* in the next line.]

79. *And even*, &c. Not only does she feel a natural yearning towards man, but this feeling even rises to something like maternal affection although being the child of heaven, brought up on earth, he is nothing more than a foster-child to her. The poet means that it is out of tenderness, though mistaken, that Earth tries to make man forget his celestial origin, by furnishing him

with earthly pleasures: just as a foster-mother would try to make her foster-child forget his home and parents, so that he may not fret after them, and make himself unhappy.

80. *With no unworthy aim*, with very good or laudable intentions.

81. *Homely Nurse*, Earth who is plain and humble (as compared with Heaven, his real parent).

82. *Her inmate man*, man who dwells in her house (the earth).

83. *Forget the glories*, &c. See note on l. 79.

84. *That imperial palace*, the glorious celestial home; heaven.

Stanza VII.—This stanza describes how, in addition to the world trying to make him forget his origin, he himself helps to obliterate his early impressions by imitating the occupations of his elders. The truthfulness of the description in this stanza, of childish amusements can be appreciated full, only by one who has watched them.

85. *New-born blisses*, pleasures of earth, which are new to him, as till then his pleasures were those of heaven. *Among*, in the midst of; surrounded by.

86. *A six-years' darling*, a dear little fellow of six, as we would say. *Pigmy*—a disguised word: it is from *Gr. pygme*, a fist—a creature as small as a fist. The pygmies were a fabulous race of dwarfs.

87. *'Mid*, amid, surrounded by. *Work of his own hands*, what he has himself made—houses of bricks or cards, drawings and so on. *Work* probably also means the litter made by him with his toys, bricks, cards, &c., which he arranges so as to represent different things—a wedding, a festival, a funeral and so on.

88. Frequently interrupted in his play by his mother's kisses. *Sallies*, sudden outbursts. *Fretted* here implies frequency, not vexation.

89. While his father watches him with fond loving eyes. *Light*, loving looks with which his eyes glisten.

90. *Plan or chart*, playthings arranged so as to represent actual scenes.

91. Which represent some incident of human life, as, in his imperfect knowledge of it, he fancies it to be. *Fragment*—in apposition with *Plan or chart.*

92. *A wedding, &c.* Such as a wedding, &c. *Wedding, festival mourning, funeral*—in apposition with *fragment.* Children are very fond of having doll's birthdays, doll's christenings, doll's weddings and so on, in mimicry of actual incidents of life.

93.-4. And this amusement now occupies his whole attention, and he keeps singing at his play, adapting the character of his song to the gay or solemn character of the mimic scene.

95-6. *Then,* by and bye (when tired of that kind of play) *Fit his tongue to dialogues of business, love or play,* hold imaginary conversations with himself or with an imaginary person on business or love affairs, or warlike subjects, assuming the character of the merchant, the lover, or the soldier.

99-100. He will soon grow tired of this amusement also.

100-101 And with fresh pleasure, and pride (in the character he assumes), he rehearses another part.

103—5 He assumes characters suited to every stage of human life: sometimes he acts the infant, sometimes the schoolboy; at other times he is a soldier, or a lover, or a judge, or an old man. *Humorous stage,* his little stage on which he exhibits his humours or whims, as on the large stage of the world, mankind exhibit their caprices and follies. *Persons, dramatis personæ* or characters represented. *Palsied age,* old age, when all the powers of mind and body have become paralysed. *Equipage,* train or retinue. *That Life.........equipage,* that are the necessary concomitants or accompaniments of human life. Where Wordsworth quoted the phrase 'humorous stage' is not known; but there is clearly an allusion in ll. 103—5 to the celebrated passage in Shakespeare's *As You Like It,* II, 7, in which the world is compared to a stage.

106-7-- As if the whole purpose of his existence were constant imitation of others.

Stanza VIII—108 *Thou.* The poet apostrophises the little child described in the preceding stanza. *Exterior semblance,* external appearance. *Belie,* give an utterly false or incorrect idea of.

109. *Thy soul's immensity* the vastness or comprehensiveness of thy soul.

110 - 111. *Thou best philosopher*, thou who hast more true wisdom than so-called philosophers, in that thou knowest intuitively truths, which they, after long effort, only obtain an imperfect knowledge of. The child, according to the theory of the poet, is born with an intuitive perception of divine truth, while the philosopher discursively attains to it after long effort, and even then only imperfectly, so that the child is the better philosopher of the two. *Who yet dost keep*, who still retains—implying that he must lose it by and bye. *Thy heritage*, the glorious inheritance which has come to thee from thy previous existence, viz. the grand truths which, in this life, thou knowest intuitively, because in a previous existence thou learnedst them by personal experience, and the remembrance of them still clings to thy mind. *Eye among the blind*, thou who clearly perceivest the truths which all around thee are vainly trying to discover—or, thou who canst reveal to others truths which they can never discover for themselves.

112. *Deaf, silent*—These epithets are applied to *eye*, by catachresis. *Deaf*, not affected by what is passing around him, and therefore able to hear distinctly the voice of truth speaking to him from within. *Silent*, unable to give expression to the grand and glorious perceptions and sentiments of his mind. *Readst the eternal deep*, art able to understand the secrets of eternity as clearly as if they were written in a book, *The eternal deep*, the ocean of eternity ; immortality.

113. Always remained, and made conscious, of the divine spirit which dwells within thee ; made to feel continually that thy soul is a portion of the divine soul.

114. *Mighty*, great. *Prophet*, one who can perceive hidden or secret things. *Seer* means pretty much the same thing. The child is called a prophet and a seer, because he intuitively perceives, or feels, truths hidden from older persons.

115. *Those truths* about God, Heaven, Nature, and so on. *On whom those truths do rest*, to whom those truths come, and with whom they remain, without any effort or seeking on his part.

117. *In darkness lost*, unable to find our way to those truths on account of the darkness in which this world envelops our soul. *Darkness of the grave*, darkness as deep as that of the grave. The poet seems to think of the world as the grave in which the remains of our heavenly nature are buried.

119. *Broods like the day over*, rests on and completely covers and envelops, as daylight does the objects of nature. *A Master o'er a slave*, exercising an influence which thou canst not withstand. The idea of a Master *brooding* over a slave is rather incongruous: the meaning is that the child cannot, even if he tries, drive out of his mind the strong feeling of his immortal or celestial nature. *Slave* here means simply one who owes obedience to another.

120.—A presence that cannot be got rid of—that possesses an irresistible power over him. *Presence*, a superior being or power.

121.—*Yet glorious in*, who art still glorious because thou still possessest.

122. *Heaven-born freedom*, freedom from worldly passion, prejudice, custom, &c —a freedom thou hast brought with thee from heaven. *Thy being's height*, the most glorious period of thy existence (on earth), *i.e.*, the childhood in which thou art least changed from thy heavenly nature. Childhood, being nearest to heaven, is, as it were, the mountain top, the natural type of freedom and nearness to heaven, from which man descends as life advances, into the vale of manhood, the low and narrow levels of custom. The child, yet radiant with the light of heavenly 'freedom,' invites the 'yoke of earthly bondage.'

123-4. Why take such pains (by imitating the acts of the later stages of life) to anticipate the burdens which life too surely brings.

125. Thus unthinkingly trying to destroy the happiness of thy childhood (by assuming the burdens of later life).

126. *Full soon*, very soon; it will not be long before. *Earthly freight*, burden of worldly care, passion, prejudice, &c.

127-8. *With a weight heavy as frost*, exerting its chilling and deadening influence on thy soul, as the frost causes the water to become frozen and motionless. *Deep almost as life*, penetrating

almost to the innermost parts of thy being; almost freezing up the very roots of thy being.

Stanza IX.—In this stanza the poet expresses his thankfulness for the fact that though he has lost much of what his soul brought from heaven, a remnant is still left.

129-30. Let us rejoice that we have not entirely lost our celestial nature. Cf. Gray's line: "Even in our ashes live their wonted fires."

131-2. Let us rejoice that we still retain a recollection of the freshness of vision and sense of nearness to the spiritual world which we possessed in our childhood, and which alas! we lost so soon.

133-4. *Breed perpetual benediction*, make me constantly thank and bless God.

135. *Not indeed for that* &c, do I raise the song of thanks and praise (ll. 139-40). *Most* (—very much) is *intensive*, rather than superlative.

136-7. Understand *namely* before this line. *Delight*, the happiness of childhood. *Liberty*, freedom from worldly cares, &c. *Simple creed of childhood*, the readiness to believe, without question, whatever they are told, that children show, because they are too simple to suspect that they might be deceived. *Whether busy or at rest*, not varying with their mood; not varying according as their minds are occupied or disengaged; always characterised by the same implicitness.

138. *New-fledged hope*, hopes or aspirations which have only recently been formed in his mind, and which are still vague or undefined. The comparison is to a young bird which has just got its feathers, and flutters about its nest, being still unable to fly.

141-2. *But for those*, &c., do I raise the song of thanks and praise. *Obstinate questionings of sense and outward things*, doubts which we cannot dismiss from our minds—doubts as to the reality of the external world as perceived by our senses. Wordsworth was in youth though he did not know it, a believer in the Hindu doctrine of *Maya*, which makes the whole external world an illusion. The Berkeleian doctrine of Idealism, held by Hindu philosophers thousands of years ago, though first propounded in Europe

only in the last century, denies the existence of an external world, and makes everything consist in ideas. See extract from Wordsworth given in the introductory notes, the sentence beginning "With a feeling" and the next sentence.

143. *Fallings from us*, vanishings, things which seemed to us to be realities leaving us and vanishing, *i.e.*, proving to be mere illusions.

144. *Blank misgivings*, vague doubts; *Blank*, literally white; colourless, and therefore of an undefined character. *Of*, felt by. *A creature*, man; the human soul.

145. Living among objects in the real existence of which it cannot believe; living in a world which appears to it unreal and illusory.

146-7. *High instincts*, noble promptings of the soul which come to him instinctively—the result of its experiences in a former state. *Our mortal nature*, the baser portion of our nature as distinguished from the heavenly portion of it. *Like a guilty thing surprised*, as if caught suddenly in the act of doing something wrong. The simple meaning of the two lines is: When such noble instincts stir up the soul, the lower instincts of man's human nature, make him look up to them with a vague awe, feeling how much it exceeds his powers to obey them in his life.

148. *But for those &c.*, do I raise the song of thanks and praise. *First affections*, early instincts or emotions of childhood.

149. *Shadowy recollections*, dim or indistinct memories of a previous glorious existence; the memories we brought with us from heaven, whence we came "not in entire forgetfulness."

150. *Be they what they may*, whether they are the reminiscences of an existence prior to birth as *I* think, or not.

151. *The fountain light of all our day*, the source of all our light (intuitive or spiritual knowledge) of our later life.

152. *A master-light of all our seeing*, the light which explains the real nature of all that we see. Cf. 'master-key.'

153. *Uphold, cherish, have*—agreeing with *which*, l. 150.

154.—5. *Noisy years*, years of active life, with all their bustle and commotion. *Seem moments*, seem as short as moments. *In the being of the eternal silence*, when compared with the unending duration of eternity. *Eternal silence*, peaceful calm of eternity, as contrasted with the bustle of human life ; (eternity considered as a whole, including our ante-natal existence, our human life, and the unending life hereafter). *Moments in the being of*, infinitesimal portions of. *Wake*, are called into active operation.

157. *Listlessness*, indifference. *Mad endeavour*, eager and foolish endeavours to forget them by plunging into the pleasures of the world.

158. Neither manhood nor boyhood.

159. Everything which is opposed to our happiness ; any misery or unhappiness or trouble.

161. *In a season of calm weather*, when we have rest from the bustle and turmoil of the world ; when undisturbed by the excitements, cares, and troubles of life.

162. Though we may be far removed from heaven. *Inland*, removed far from the ocean of eternity (by our worldly life).

163 - 4. We are enabled to catch faint glimpses of the eternal existence from which we have come into the world. *That immortal sea*, the ocean of eternity.

165. *In a moment*, by the rapidity of thought. *Travel thither*, transport ourselves in imagination to the shores of that sea, viz, our infancy and childhood.

166. *See the children sport upon the shore*, imagine ourselves once more children, happy in being always on the shores of eternity, in always retaining some of their celestial nature ; recall to memory what we felt when we were so near heaven in our childhood.

167. Once more feel, as we felt then, the emotions and ideas of our celestial or immortal nature rushing forcibly into our mind ; hear eternity speaking to us awful truths as it were. *Rolling evermore*, rolling for ever ; of eternity.

Stanza X.—168. *Then* such being the case; seeing that we have still cause for thankfulness in that we still have recollections of our former glorious existence.

171. *In thought*, by sympathising with you in your joy (though we do not actually take part in your demonstrations of it).

172. *Ye that pipe*, birds that sing. *Ye that play*, beasts that dance or bound (as if in accompaniment to the songs of the birds).

173-4. Ye that feel so exquisitely this day the happiness of springtime. *Through your hearts*, penetrating your hearts through and through; keenly or exquisitely. *The may*, Maytime.

175-6. What does it matter though I can no longer see in objects of nature that dream-like splendour which once invested them in my sight?

178. *Of splendour*, when I could see splendour.

179.-80 Instead of vainly lamenting what we have lost, we will comfort ourselves with what is still left us, viz—

181-2. In that sympathy with nature which, we felt from the very beginning of our life, and which once felt, must be felt always *i.e.*, which can never be lost altogether.

183-3. In the consoling thoughts which arise from the contemplation of human suffering or sorrow. Wordsworth had lost his, brother in 1805, and he tells us "that deep distress had humanized his soul" The sorrow that chastens is a source of spiritual strength and benefit: it makes us better men.

185. In the faith which enables us to look forward hopefully to a life beyond the dark grave. [This feeling is unknown to the *child*, and but imperfectly realized by the *youth*: it is the *man* who can feel the full force of what is meant by the immortality of the soul.]

186. In maturer age, which makes our minds calm, serene, and cheerful, and enables us to take correct and unbiassed views of ourselves and all around us. *Philosophic*, able to reflect calmly.

Stanza XI.—188. Do not fear that we shall ever cease to love one another—that the sympathy between us will ever be lost.

189. *Yet*, still; even at this period of my life. *I feel your might*, I continue to feel your powerful influence. *In my heart of hearts*—a common phrase for in my inmost heart; in the inmost recesses of my being.

190. *Only* properly goes with *one*. *One* is emphatic, and antithetical to *habitual*. *One delight*, the happiness of seeing a celestial splendour in the objects of nature.

191. To feel your permanent, or lasting influence, instead of that more exquisite, but transitory, pleasure. The poet means that the pleasure he now feels in nature is of a more sober, but also more permanent, nature than that which he found in the "visionary gleam" of childhood.

192. *Fret*, run with a murmuring sound.

193. *When I tripped lightly as they*, when I ran about, with as light a heart as they seem to have; when I was gay and happy, *i.e.*, in my childhood.

194-5. I still delight to watch the radiance of the rising sun, *Innocent*. The epithet is suggested by *new-born*. We may explain it as meaning *clear, serene*.

196-8. Having watched man's mortal career for a considerable time, and observed its transitoriness, the natural enthusiasm of my feelings has been toned down, and, though I no longer see in the setting sun that celestial radiance which I saw in my childhood, it is still glorious and beautiful to my eyes, and more suggestive, as typifying the evanescence of human glory. *Another race hath been*, I have run a different race from that which I ran in my childhood; I have lived a different life from that I lived as a child. The use of *race* so near *palms* leaves little doubt that *race* means a running or career, and not *generation* as both Turner and Chambers interpret it. *Other palms are won*, I have obtained other rewards than those of childhood, *i.e.*, the experiences of mature age, more valuable than the evanescent glories of childhood.

200. *The human heart*, the heart with its human feelings, with "its tenderness, its joys and fears," as contrasted with the heart.

of the child, which, fresh from its celestial home, feels only the glory and the happiness which it brought thence, without feeling any of the troubles and cares of humanity.

202. *The meanest flower that blows,* the humblest flower of the field. Scott has borrowed this expression in the Introduction to Canto I. of his Marmion. See lines quoted on page 24. *Blows*, blossoms.

203. Thoughts which are too deep-seated to be expressed outwardly through the ordinary medium of tears; which thrill him to his inmost being, and are not such as to be easily expressed. As grief may be too deep for tears, so may also other tender emotions be too deep for tears.

The Title of the Ode.—One word in conclusion as to the title of the Ode. The main idea of the Ode is that of an ante-natal existence, that is, that the existence of our souls dates from eternity, and is coeval with eternity itself. This idea is not expressed by the word *immortality*, which denotes, rather the idea of the soul having no *end*, than that of its having no *beginning*. The word must therefore be taken as including both aspects: no beginning and no end. *Eternality*, which has been proposed instead, is open to exactly the same objection.

ANALYTICAL ABSTRACT OF THE ODE.

Stanzas I—IV.—These stanzas contain a statement of certain facts connected with the experiences of our childhood, as compared with those of our maturer years, which require to be accounted for.

STANZA I.—To the poet, in his childhood, the most familiar objects and scenes of nature seemed to be invested with a dream-like vividness and splendour, which faded away till in his manhood he could see it no longer.

STANZA II.—Not only the commonplace objects and scenes of nature, but even the more picturesque, beautiful and striking ones,

such as the rainbow, the rose, the Moon on a clear night, the stars reflected on the water, the rising Sun, have lost the glory which invested them in his early years.

STANZA III.—The poet sees all nature rejoicing in the happy spring time—birds singing, lambs frisking, cataracts roaring, mountains sending forth echoes, winds breathing softly, shepherd-boys shouting,—and yet he feels there is something wanting—the dreamy splendour which all these sights and sounds possessed for him in his early years; and though this feeling makes him sad, he overcomes it.

STANZA IV.—The poet tries to cast off the feeling of sadness resulting from the consciousness of this loss, seeing that all nature, animated and inanimate—earth, animals, children, all—is full of the joy of May, and feeling that he would be marring the harmony of nature by giving way to sad thoughts; but the scenes before him recall those of his childhood, and bring the difference between them home to him so forcibly, that he cannot forget what he has lost.

Stanzas V—VIII.—In these stanzas, the poet propounds his theory explaining both how it is that nature seems to wear so glorious an aspect in our childhood, and also how this glory gradually fades away till it disappears altogether in our mature age.

STANZA V.—The reason why a dreamy splendour pervades all nature is that our souls had a previous existence in the bright realms of heaven, and when they came into this world, into the prison-house of the body, they brought with them some of their original celestial glory, and, as in our childhood this glory encompasses us, we perceive everything *through* it, and therefore everything in nature is tinged with that glory (just as objects seen through coloured glass take a tinge from the colour of the glass). This remnant of glory, however fades away gradually, till by the time we attain manhood it disappears altogether.

STANZA VI.—Explains how the pleasure of the world contribute towards the disappearance of this dreamy splendour. As we grow older and older, we are drawn more and more towards the

pleasures of earth which, though good in their own way, tend to materialize our ideas, and by effacing the recollection of our celestial origin remove us further and further from the glory which we trailed behind us on our way hither.

STANZA VII.—Explains how we ourselves, in our childhood, contribute to this decadence of our celestial glory, and the fading of the dreamy splendour of the impressions and emotions of our childhood, by anticipating, in our infanile amusements, those burdens of life which must come soon, and must, in the ordinary course of things, destroy that splendour.

STANZA VIII.—In this stanza, the poet pursuing the reflections suggested by the preceding stanza, apostrophises, as a type of infantile humanity, the child whom, in that stanza, he has described as a concrete example of the tendency of childhood to anticipate the burdens and occupations of manhood, and asks him why, so little removed from heaven as he is, and retaining, as he does, so strong a sense of his celestial origin, and the immortality of his soul, he should try so assiduously to anticipate the burdens of life and the bonds of custom, and thus prematurely blunt his sense of "heavenly freedom."

Stanza IX.—In this stanza, the poet consoles himself for the loss of the glory which cast its radiance over the impressions of his early years, by the philosophical reflection that though that glory is gone, it is not gone altogether: that he can still recall the feelings of childhood, and in some measure enter into them again: that, though he no longer feels the same sense of delight and freedom, and the same trustful unquestioning simplicity of mind he can still remember them with feelings of joy and thankfulness, and that he still retains the same sense of the unreality of external things, the same vague reminiscences of a prior existence in a more glorious place, which nothing can obliterate altogether from his mind, and which he can recall in moments of calm reflection.

Stanzas X-XI.—These stanzas contain the poet's idea of the true philosophy of life, as deduced from the facts given above, and the theory propounded to explain them.

STANZA X—Referring back to stanza VI., in which he described how he felt sad when all nature was happy, he calls on all objects

of nature to revel in the happiness of spring-time, saying that he is ready to join them in thought; for, though he has lost the "visionary splendour" of his childhood, yet there are still left to him many things which ought to console him for that loss: the sympathy with nature; the sorrow that subdues and chastens; the faith in a life beyond the grave; the calm, serene mood of the matured mind, unswayed by prejudice, undisturbed by passion.

STANZA XI.—Sums up the whole matter. It is true the "glory and the freshness of a dream," which characterised the impressions and feelings of his early years is gone, yet, in its place, he has got something which, though less dazzling, is of a more permanent nature: he now has the power of feeling and understanding the grandeur of natural objects, in one sense, more fully than in child hood (the appreciation being based on reason, and not arising from instinct), and, with a heart matured by the human sympathies of riper years he sees in everything, however humble, a moral meaning.

NOTES ON

Tintern Abbey.

The title given in this edition and many others is not a very appropriate one —The full title as given by Wordsworth himself is "Lines composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey, on revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a tour."

This Poem is regarded by many competent critics as one of Wordsworth's "noblest utterances."

Of it Wordsworth himself writes: "I began it upon leaving Tintern after crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was entering Bristol in the evening, after a halt of four or five days with my sister. Not a line of it was uttered, and not any part of it written down till I reached Bristol." This was on 13th July, 1798.

1-2. *With the length of &c.*—A pleonasm; a sort of hendiadys for 'and five long winters.'

4. *A sweet inland murmur.*—A few miles above Tintern the sea tides do not affect the river Wye. The murmur of the waters is the gentle murmur of its rush to the sea.

5. *These steep and lofty cliffs, &c.*—Following with the eye the lofty cliffs our gaze loses itself in the calm depths of the sky.

Cf. the poem called *Wordsworth Peak* l. 5—8.

This cliff so high,
Above us, and so distant in its height,
Is visible; and often seems to send
Its own deep quiet to restore our hearts.

See also a passage in Tennyson's *Lucretius* beginning at l. 105.

10. *Sycamore.*—A tree.

11. *Orchard-tufts.*—Clumps of fruit trees.

13. *One green hue.*—One and the same hue of green.

Cf. Macbeth, Act II, Sc. ii, i. 62. *Making the green one red.*

14. *Not disturb...landscape &c.*—In later editions these words, are omitted, this line running, 'Mid groves and copses. Once again, &c.

15. *Hardly.*—But they are scarcely to be called.

16. *Sportive.*—Personal Metaphor. A curious epithet. It is as if the wood near by had in mere gaiety of heart run out into the fields here and there producing the effect of hedgerows.

18. *Sent up in silence.*—There must have been people about to light the smoke-producing fires.

19. *Uncertain notice.*—The smoke in such a place indicated the presence of gipsies or other vagrants as there were no houses.

20. *Uncertain.*—If the smoke had been from a house it would have told, with some certainty who had lit the fire. As it came from a place where there was no house it was uncertain by whose hands the fire had been lit.

23. *These beauteous forms.*—The poet glances around him at the trees, and the river, and the other beautiful forms of nature.

25—29. A blind man though he may have a landscape described to him by a friend can never actually take in all its beauty. With the poet it was different—he had studied the landscape and its beauties on a previous occasion, and as he says, 'oft in lonely rooms, &c., had owed sweet sensations to them,—felt them in his blood and in his heart.'

30. *And passing.*—Supply 'felt them' before 'passing.'

My purer mind.—My mind when not filled with the din of cities and worldly matters.

32. *Unremembered pleasure.*—The pleasures derived from charming scenery may be very real without the recipient being able to say exactly how it was produced, or to remember it.

35-36. *Little, nameless, unremembered.*—These words are often quoted.

Acts.—Objective case in apposition to 'portion.'

38. *Of aspect more sublime.*—Of a more sublime kind—having a sublimer outlook.

39. *Burthem.*—Archaic and poetical for 'burden.'

40. *Weary.*—Causing weariness.

41. *Unintelligible.*—To man, that is—but to God who made it, a harmonious whole.

42. *Lightened.*—The burden of life is made lighter by the blessed mood in which the affections, &c.

44. *Frame.*—Case absolute.

46. *Laid asleep in body.*—Sleep simulates death. While the body sleeps, the soul lives.

50. *We see into the life of things.*—We poets see the inner nature and hidden meaning of things, which escape the ordinary man.

51. *This.*—Namely, that with an eye, &c., line 48.

53. *Shapes.*—Fancies that have passed through my mind in unhappy days.

54. *The fretful stir unprofitable.*—Observe the place of the noun 'stir' between two qualifying adjectives. 'Stir' hurry and worry. 'Fretful' is a transferred epithet. By the 'unprofitable stir' men are made 'fretful,' that is, 'irritable,' 'restless.'

55 *The fever of the world.*—The excitement.

57. *How oft.*—Repeated from line 52, the lines between being parenthetical.

58. *O sylvan Wye!*—Called 'sylvan' because it wanders through the woods (*sylvæ.*)

Wye.—One of the most beautiful rivers in South Wales, rising near the source of the Severn on Plinlimmon. It winds along until it falls into an estuary of the Severn at Chepstow. It is somewhat noted for its rapid course when it first rises, and still more famous for the tidal wave which makes the tide at Chepstow higher than anywhere in Britain.—Monmouth is on the Wye.

59. *Turned to thee.*—For consolation.

60. *Gleams of half extinguished, &c.*—What is the metaphor taken from?

61. *Recognitions.*—Of the beauties observed by me on my former visit.

62-63. *Somewhat of a sad perplexity, &c.*—To a certain extent with a perplext and sad mind. The pictures formerly imprinted in my mind are once more revived, *i.e.*, made to live again.

64. *Here.*—On thy banks, O Wye.

69—72. *Like a roe.*—Referring to his vigour as a young man five years previously.

72. *Nature led.*—Wherever the beautiful prospect invited me.

More like a man.—In his haste he might have been taken by an onlooker for some one in flight through terror, rather than some one in eager quest of the beautiful.

75. *The coarser pleasures.*—He was as that time a young man and no longer, cared as boys do, for eating—apples, let us say.

76. *Glad animal movements.*—The frolicsomeness of youth.

77. *All in all.*—Everything; satisfied all my longings.

Paint.—Describe.

82. *An appetite.*—I eagerly desired them has a hungry man does food.

84. *By thought supplied.*—In those days cataracts and streams and woods and their varying colours produced in me a feeling of intense love for nature that 'had no need of a remoter charm nor any interest unborrowed from the eye.' Now that I am so much older the memory of the beauties of nature satisfies me to a great degree.

85. *That time.*—The time of my eager youth.

86. *Aching joys.*—Too great joy produces a sort of pain. Thus Shelley.—

Till joy forget itself again—
And, too intense, is turned to pain.

87. *Dizzy rapture.*—Intense delight producing a sort of dizziness.

88. *Other gifts have followed.*—He no longer, as in his early manhood, physically, as it were, drinks in the outward beauties of Nature but is now able to divine and to appreciate her inner beauties and harmonies. See *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality in Man.* p. 68, l. 175—186.

93. *The still, sad music of humanity.*—Is not the poet probably here referring to the fact that as we grow older we see and hear in nature the sadder, more pathetic side of life, as for example the autumn leaves, which fall upon the ground in silent sadness. They are like the lives of men,—who in sorrow and trouble pursue their work silently, causing no discord, only harmony, but in a minor key.

96—104.—*A sense sublime.*—Myers, in his *Wordsworth*, (English Men of Letters series), Ch. X, p. 127, has the following passage which may well be read with the text :—

"To express what is characteristic in Wordsworth we must recur to a more generalized conception of the relations between the natural and the spiritual worlds. We must say with Plato—the law-giver of all subsequent idealists—that the unknown realities around us, which the philosopher apprehends by the contemplation of abstract truth, become in various ways obscurely perceptible to men under the influence of "divine madness,"—of an enthusiasm which is in fact inspiration. And further, giving, as he so often does, a half-fanciful expression to a substance of deep meaning,—Plato distinguishes four kinds of this enthusiasm. There is the prophet's glow of revelation; and the prevailing prayer which averts the wrath of heaven; and that philosophy which enters, so to say, unawares into the poet through his art, and into the lover through his love. Each of these stimuli may so exalt the inward faculties as to make a man,—"bereft of reason but filled with divinity,"—percipient of an intelligence other and larger than his own. To this list Wordsworth has made an important addition. He has shown by his example and writings that the contemplation of Nature may become a stimulus as inspiring as these; may enable us "to see into the life of things"—as far, perhaps, as beatific vision or prophetic rapture can attain. Assertions so impalpable as these must justify themselves by subjective evidence He who claims to give a message must satisfy us that he has himself received it; and inasmuch as transcendent things are in themselves inexpresssible, he must convey to us in hints and figures the conviction which we need. Prayer may bring the spiritual world near to us. Art, too, may be inspired, but the artist in whatever field he

works, must have "such a mastery of his mystery" that the fabric of his imagination stands visible in its own light before our eyes,—

> Seeing it is built
> Of music; therefore never built at all,
> And, therefore, built for ever.

Love may open heaven; but when the lover would invite us "thither, where are the eyes of Beatrice," he must make us feel that his individual passion is indeed part and parcel of that love "which moves the sun and the other stars."

And so also with Wordsworth. Unless the words which describe the intense and sympathetic gaze with which he contemplates Nature convinces of the reality of "the light which never was on sea or land,"—of the "Presence which disturbs him with the joy of elevated thoughts"—of the authentic vision of those hours

> When the light of sense
> Goes out, but with a flash that has revealed.
> The invisible world;—

Unless his tone awakes a responsive conviction in ourselves, there is no argument by which he can prove to us that he is offering a new insight to mankind."

107. *The mighty world of eye and ear.*—The world as we see and hear it about us.

110. *In nature and the language of the sense.*—How do we interpret nature?—Through our senses—sight, hearing, feeling, smelling.

111. *The anchor of my purest thoughts.*—He would have the world know that nature is his chief teacher—to her his soul is, as it were, closely knit and she guides him to everything that is best and purest.

115. *Thus.*—By my devotion to nature.

116. *My genial spirits.*—My cheerfulness of mind.

Decay.—To die out.

118. *My dearest friend.*—His sister, Dorothy Wordsworth.

119. *The voice.*—Read *thy* voice.

Catch.—Hear from time to time.

121. *My former pleasures.*—His sister was visiting the banks of the Wye for the first time, and, no doubt, the constant expressions from her of admiration at the scenery recalled to the Poet his former vivid impressions.

122. *Thy wild eyes.*—Her eyes were filled with the light of wild surprise at the natural beauties she was then seeing.—So again in l. 141, the Poet speaks of his sister's '*wild* ecstasies.'

126. *Privilege.*—Sole right.

128. *Inform.*—Fashion, give life to.

137. *Therefore.*—Nature is sure in the end to reveal her hidden mysteries and to make you feel as I do now; *therefore* enjoy her treasures now as you are doing, walk in the moonlight, let the winds toss your hair about, &c.

141. *Wild ecstasies.*—Somewhat excited expressions of extreme pleasure.

142. *Sober pleasure.*—Antithetical to 'wild ecstasies.'

146. *If solitude, or fear, &c.*—Sharp in his *Studies* (p. 46) refers to this line:—What prophetic pathos do these words assume when we remember how long and mournfully, ere life ended, those wild eyes were darkened"—Quoted by Turner.

153. *This stream.*—The Wye.

156. *Unwearied.*—An unwearied worshipper of nature.

Tennyson.

INTRODUCTION.

I.—Life of Tennyson.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, D. C. L., F. R. S., late Poet Laureate, third son of the late Rev. G. C. Tennyson, and elder brother of the late Right Hon. C. Tennyson D'Eyncourt, was born in 1809, at his father's parsonage, at Somersby, Lincolnshire; his mother, who died in 1865, being a daughter of the Rev. Stephen Fytche. He was educated by his father, and in due course proceeded to Trinity College, Cambridge. In 1829 he gained the Chancellor's Medal by a poem in blank verse, entitled "*Timbuctoo.*" With the exception of a volume of poems published in conjunction with his brother Charles, when they were boys, and a prize poem, composed whilst an undergraduate at Cambridge, Tennyson did not publish anything till 1830, when "*Poems, Chiefly Lyrical*" appeared, and from 1842 the steady and rapid growth of his fame may be traced. The two volumes then issued were in part merely a re-publication, but the most important poems were those added to his former productions. It was at once apparent that the author of the "*Morte d' Arthur,*" "*Locksley Hall,*" the "*May Queen,*" and the "*Two Voices,*" was entitled to take the first rank among English poets, a reputation which was more than sustained by the two great works which followed. So well known and popular, indeed, had Tennyson become after the publication of "*In Memoriam,*" in 1850, that it seemed only a matter of course, upon the death of Wordsworth in 1850, that the privilege of wearing "the laurel greener from the brows of him who uttered nothing base" should be offered to him. The "*Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*" was published in 1852, on the morning of the funeral; and from that occurrence to the time of his death few events of more than ordinary interest in the eyes of Englishmen took place without eliciting from Tennyson some poem worthy of the occasion. He has written "*Poems chiefly Lyrical,*" published in 1830; "*Poems,*" in 1832; "*Poems,*" 2 vols., in 1842; "*The Princess a Medley,*" in 1847; "*In Memoriam,*" issued anonymously, in 1850,

being a series of elegies--a tribute of affection to the memory of Arthur Hallam, a son of the eminent historian, and the chosen friend of the poet in his earlier days at Cambridge; "*Maud, and other Poems,*" in 1855; "*The Idylls of the King,*" in 1858; "*Enoch Arden, and other Poems,*" in 1864; "*The Holy Grail, and other Poems,*" published Dec. 15, 1869; "*The Window, or the Songs of the Wrens,*" in 1870; and "*Gareth and Lynette,*" in 1872. "*A Concordance to the Entire Works of Alfred Tennyson,*" published in 1869, is a remarkable proof of the Laureate's great popularity. At the Commemoration of 1855, the University of Oxford, giving expression to the universal feeling of England, conferred on the poet the honorary degree of D. C. L., and the fellows of his own College, Trinity, Cambridge, endorsing the judgment of the sister university, subscribed to purchase his bust (by Woolner), which they have placed in their library, and in 1869 they unanimously elected him an honorary fellow of the College. In 1879 Tennyson re-published "*The Lover's Tale,*" a poem which was originally printed in 1833, but soon withdrawn from circulation. In the re-issue it is accompanied with a reprint of the sequel, a work of the author's mature life, "*The Golden Supper.*" After this followed "*Ballads, and other Poems.*" Among his dramatic compositions are "*Queen Mary,*" 1875; "*Harold,*" 1876; "*The Cup,*" a play which was represented at the Lyceum Theatre, Jan. 3, 1881, Mr. (now Sir Henry) Irving taking the principal character (as also was "*Queen Mary*"); "*The Falcon,*" produced by Mr. and Mrs. Kendal; and "*The Promise of May,*" a drama in three acts, brought out at the Globe Theatre, Nov. 11, 1882. In Dec. 1883, Tennyson accepted a peerage as Baron Tennyson of Aldworth, Sussex, and of Freshwater, Isle of Wight. After this he published "*Becket,*" "*Tiresias and other Poems,*" and, at the end of 1886, "*Locksley Hall Sixty Years After.*"—MEN OF THE TIME. (Adapted).

Lord Tennyson died in October 1892.

II.—Critical Observations on the Selected Poems and on Tennyson's Poems generally.

[*From Stedman's "Victorian Poets.*"]

It seems to me that the only just estimate of Tennyson's position is that which declares him to be, by eminence, the representative poet of the recent era. Not, like one or another of his compeers, representative of the melody, wisdom, passion, or other partial phase of the era, but of the time itself, with its diverse elements in harmonious conjunction. Years have strengthened my belief that a future age will regard him, independently of his merits, as bearing this relation to his period. In his verse he is as truly "the glass of

fashion and the mould of form" of the Victorian generation in the nineteenth century as Spenser was of the Elizabethan court, Milton of the Protectorate, Pope of the reign of Queen Anne. During his supremacy there have been few great leaders, at the head of different schools, such as belonged to the time of Byron, Wordsworth, and Keats. His poetry has gathered all the elements which find vital expression in the complex modern art.

Has the influence of Tennyson made the recent British school or has his genius itself been modified and guided by the period? It is the old question of the river and the valley. The two have taken shape together; yet the beauty of Tennyson's verse was so potent from the first, and has so increased in potency, that we must pronounce him an independent genius, certainly more than the mere creature of his surroundings.

Years ago, when he was yet comparatively unknown, an American poet [Poe], himself finely gifted with the lyrical ear, was so impressed by Tennyson's method, that, "in perfect sincerity," he pronounced him "the noblest poet that ever lived." If he had said "the noblest artist," and confined this judgment to lyrists of the English tongue, he possibly would have made no exaggeration. Yet there have been artists with a less conscious manner and a broader style. The Laureate is always aware of what he is doing; he is his own *daimon*,—the inspirer and controller of his own utterances. He sings by note no less than by ear, and follows a score of his own inditing. But, acknowledging his culture, we have no right to assume that his ear is not as fine as that of any poet who gives voice with more careless rapture. His average is higher than that of other English masters, though there may be scarcely one who in special flights has not excelled him. By Spencer's law of progress, founded on the distribution of values, his poetry is more eminent than most which has preceded it.

I have inferred that the very success of Tennyson's art has made it common in our eyes, and rendered us incapable of fairly judging it. When a poet has length of days, and sees his language a familiar portion of men's thoughts, he no longer can attract that romantic interest with which the world regards a genius freshly brought to hearing. Men forget that he, too, was once new, unhackneyed, appetizing. But recall the youth of Tennyson, and see how complete the revolution with which he has, at least, been coeval, and how distinct his music then seemed from everything which had gone before.

He began as a metrical artist, pure and simple, and with a feeling perfectly unique,—at a long remove, even, from that of so absolute an artist as was John Keats. He had very little notion beyond the production of rhythm, melody, color, and other poetic

effects. Instinct led him to construct his machinery before essaying to build. Many have discerned, in his youthful pieces, the influence of Wordsworth and Keats, but no less that of the Italian poets, and of the early English balladists. I shall hereafter revert to "Oriana," "Mariana," and "The Lady of Shallott," as work that in its kind is fully up to the best of those Pre-Raphaelites who, by some arrest of development, stop preciously where Tennyson made his second step forward, and censure him for having gone beyond them.

Meaningless as are the opening melodies of his collected verse, how delicious they once seemed, as a change from even the greatest productions which then held the public ear. Here was something of a new kind! The charm was legitimate. Tennyson's immediate predecessors were so fully occupied with the mass of a composition that they slighted details: what beauty they displayed was not of the parts, but of the whole. Now, in all arts, the natural advance is from detail to general effect. How seldom those who begin with a broad treatment, which apes maturity, acquire subsequently the minor graces that alone can finish the perfect work! By comparison of the late and early writings of great English poets,—Shakespeare and Milton—one observes the process of healthful growth. Tennyson proved his kindred genius by this instinctive study of details in his immature verses. In marked contrast to his fellows, and to every predecessor but Keats,—"that strong, excepted soul,"—he seemed to perceive from the outset, that *Poetry is an art, and chief of the fine arts: the easiest to dabble in, the hardest in which to reach true excellence*; that it has its technical secrets, its mysterious lowly paths that reach to aerial outlooks, and this no less than sculpture, painting, music, or architecture, but even more. He devoted himself, with the eager spirit of youth, to mastering this exquisite art, and wreaked his thoughts upon expression, for the expression's sake. And what else should one attempt, with small experiences, little concern for the real world, and less observation of it? He had dreams rather than thoughts; but was at the most sensitive period of life with regard to rhythm, colour, and form. In youth feeling is indeed "deeper than all thought," and responds divinely to every sensuous confrontment with the presence of beauty............

The volume of 1832, which began with "The Lady of Shalott," and contained "Eleanore," "Margaret," "The Miller's Daughter," "The Palace of Art," "The May Queen," "Fatima," "The Lotos-Eaters" and "A Dream of Fair Women," was published in his twenty-second year. All in all, a more original and beautiful volume of minor poetry never was added to our literature. The Tennysonian manner here was clearly developed, largely pruned of mannerisms. The command of delicious metres; the rhythmic susurrus of stanzas whose every word is as needful and studied as

the flower or scroll of ornamental architecture,—yet so much an interlaced portion of the whole, that the special device is forgotten in the general excellence; the effect of colour, of that music which is a passion in itself, of the scenic pictures which are the counterparts of changeful emotions; all are here, and the poet's work is the epitome of every mode in art. Even if these lyrics and idyls had expressed nothing, they were of priceless value as guides to the renaissance of beauty. Thenceforward, slovenly work was impossible, subject to instant rebuke by contrast. The force of metrical elegance made its way and carried everything before it. From this day Tennyson confessedly took his place at the head of what some attempt to classify as the art-school: that is, of poets who largely produce their effect by harmonizing scenery and detail with the emotions or impassioned action of their verse.

The tendency of his genius was revealed in this volume. The author plainly was a collegeman, a student of many literatures, and though an Englishman to the core, alive to suggestions from Italian and Grecian sources. His Gothic feeling was manifest in "The Lady of Shalott" and "The Sisters"; his classicism in "Œnone"; his idyllic method, especially, now defined itself making the scenery of a poem enhance the central idea,—thought and landscape being so blended that it was difficult to determine which suggested the other.

I shall elsewhere examine with some care the relations between Tennyson and Theocritus, and the general likeness of the Victorian to the Alexandrian period, and at present need not enter upon this special ground. Enough to say that the Greek influence is visible in many portions of the volume of 1832, sometimes through almost literal translations of classical passages. "Œnone," modelled upon the new Doric verse, ranks with "Lycidas" as an Hellenic study. While this most chaste and beautiful poem fascinated every reader, the wisest criticism found more of genuine worth in the purely English quality of those limpid pieces in which the melody of the lyric is wedded to the sentiment and picture of the idyll,—"The Miller's Daughter," "The May Queen," and "Lady Clara Vere de Vere." More dewy, fresh, pathetic, native verse had not been written since the era of "As You Like It" and "Winter's Tale." During ten years this book accomplished its auspicious work, until the author's fame and influence had so extended that he was encouraged to print the volume of 1842, wherein he first gave the name of idylls to poems of the class that has brought him a distinctive reputation...... •

Tennyson's [blank verse] is of two kinds, one of which is suited to the heroic episodes in his idyllic poetry,—the first important example being the "Morte d'Arthur," which opened the volume of 1842, and is now made a portion of the "Idylls of the King." I

hold the verse of that poem to be his own invention, derived from the study of Homer and his natural mastery of the Saxon element in our language. Milton's Latinism is so pronounced as to be un-English; on the other hand, there is such affinity between the simple strength of the Homeric Greek and that of the English in which Saxon words prevail, that the former can be rendered into the latter with great effect. Tennyson recognizes this in his prelude to "Morte d'Arthur" deprecating his heroics as "faint Homeric echoes nothing worth." But almost with the perusal of the first two lines,

> "So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
> Among the mountains by the winter sea."

We see that this style surpasses other blank verse in strength and condensation. It soon became the model for a score of younger aspirants; in short, impressed itself upon the artistic mind as a new and vigorous form of our grandest English measure.

The other style of Tennyson's blank-verse is found in his purely idyllic pieces—"The Gardener's Daughter," "Dora," "Godiva," and, upon a lower plane, such eclogues as "Audley Court" and "Edwin Morris." "St. Simeon Stylites" and "Ulysses" have each a special manner. In the first-named group, the poet brought to completeness the Victorian idyllic verse. The three are models from which he could not advance; in surpassing beauty and naturalness unequalled, I say, by many of his later efforts. What Crabbe essayed in a homely fashion, now, at the touch of a finer artist, became the perfection of rural, idyllic tenderness. "Dora" is like a Hebrew pastoral, the paragon of its kind, with not a quotable detail, a line too much or too little, but faultless as a whole. Who can read it without tears? "Godiva" and "The Gardener's Daughter" demand no less praise for descriptive felicity of another kind. But, for virile grandeur and astonishingly compact expression, there is no blank-verse poem, equally restricted as to length, that approached the "Ulysses": conception, imagery, and thought are royally imaginative, and the assured hand is Tennyson's throughout.........

In this collection, too, we find his early experiments in the now famous measure of "In Memoriam." Purest and highest of all the lyrical pieces are "St. Agnes" and "Sir Galahad," full of white light, and each a stainless idealization of its theme. "Sir Galahad" must be recited by a clarion voice, ere one can fully appreciate the sounding melody, the knightly, heroic ring. The poet has never chanted a more ennobling strain...........

The public is indebted to Tennyson for a restoration of precious Saxon words, too long forgotten, which we trust, will hereafter maintain their ground. He is a purifier of our tongue: a resistant to the novelties of slang and affectation intruded upon our literature

by the mixture of races and the extension of English-speaking colonies to every clime and continent in the world.........

In whatsoever light we examine the characteristics of the Laureate's genius, the complete and even balance of his poetry is from first to last conspicuous. It exhibits that just combination of lyrical elements which makes a symphony, wherein it is difficult to say what quality predominates. Reviewing minor poets, we think this one attractive for the wild flavour of his unstudied verse; another, for the gush and music of his songs; a third, for idyllic sweetness or tragic power, but in Tennyson we have the strong repose of art, whereof—as of the perfection of nature—the world is slow to tire. It has become conventional, but remember that nothing endures to the point of conventionalism which is not based upon lasting rules; that it once was new and refreshing and is sure, in future days, to regain the early charm.

The one thing longed for, and most frequently missed, in work of this kind, is the very wild flavour of which I speak. We are not always broad enough and elevated enough to be content with symphonic art. Guinevere wearies of Arthur. There are times when a tart apple, a crust of bread, a bit of wild honey, are worth more to us than all the delicacies of the larder. We wish more rugged outbreaks, more impetuous discords; we listen for the sudden irregular trill of the thicket songster. The fulness of Tennyson's art evades the charm of spontaneity. How rarely he takes you by surprise? His stream is sweet, assured, strong; but how seldom the abrupt bend, the plunge of the cataract, the thunder and the spray! Doubtless he has enthusiasms, but all are held in hand, college-life, study, restraint, comfort, reverence, have done their work upon him. He is well broken, as we say of a thoroughbred, proud and true, and, though he makes few bursts of speed, keeps early forward, and is sure to be first at the stand.

We come back to the avowal that in technical excellence, as an artist in verse, Alfred Tennyson is the greatest of modern poets. Other masters, old or new, have surpassed him in special instances; but he is the one who rarely nods, and who *always* finishes his verse to the extreme. Not that he is free from weaknesses: to the present day, when pushed for inspiration, he resorts to inventions as disagreeable as the affectation which repelled many healthy minds from his youthful lyrics. Faults of this sort in "Maud" and later poems, have somewhat prejudiced another class of readers,—people who, with what a critic denominates their "eighteenth century" taste, still pay homage to the genius of Pope for merits which the Laureate has in even greater excess. A question recently has been mooted, whether Milton, were he living in our time, could write "Paradise Lost"? A no less interesting conjecture woud relate to the kind of poetry that we should have

from Pope, were he of Tennyson's generation. The physical traits of the two men being so utterly at variance, no doubt many will scout my suggestion that the verse of the former might closely resemble that of the latter. Pope excelled in qualities which, *mutatis mutandis*, are noticeable in Tennyson: finish and minuteness of detail, and the elevation of common things to fanciful beauty. Here, again, compare "The Rape of the Lock" with "The Sleeping Beauty," and especially with "The Talking Oak." A faculty of "saying things," which, in Pope (his being a cruder age, when persons needed that homely wisdom which seems trite enough in our day), became didacticism, in Tennyson is sweetly natural and poetic. Since the period of the "Essay on Man" from what writer can you cull so many wise and fine proverbial phrases as from the poet who says:—

> "'Tis better to have loved and lost,
> Than never to have loved at all";
>
> "Kind hearts are more than coronets,
> And simple faith than Norman blood";
>
> "There lives more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds";

who puts the theory of evolution in a couplet when he sings of

> "one far-off divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves";

who so tersely avows that

> "Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers";
> "Things seen are mightier than things heard";

and again:—

> "Old age hath yet his honor and his toil";

from whom else so many of these proverbs, which are not isolated, but, as in Pope's works, recur by tens and scores? Curious felicities of verse:—

> "Laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere";

lines which record the most exquisite thrills of life:—

> "Our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips";

and unforgotten similes:—

> "Dear as remembered kisses after death";—

such beauties as these occur in multitudes, and literally make up the body of the Laureate's song. In feeling, imagination, largeness of

heart and head, the diminutive satirist can enter into no comparison with our poet, but the situation is otherwise as respects finish and moralistic power. The essence of Pope's art was false, because it was the product of a false age; Dryden had been his guide to the stilted heroics of the French school, which so long afterwards, Pope lending them such authority, stalked through English verse. In this day he would, like Tennyson, have found his masters among the early, natural poets, or obtained, in a direct manner, what classicism he needed, and not through Gallic filters. Yet it is not long since I heard an eminent man lauding Pope for the very characteristics which, as here shown, are conspicuous in Tennyson; and decrying the latter, misled by that chance acquaintance which is worse than no acquaintance at all. In *suggestiveness* Pope was singularly deficient: his constructive faculty so prevailed, that he left nothing to the reader's fancy, but explained to the end. He had no such moods as those evoked by "Tears, idle tears," and "Break, break, break!" and therefore his verses never suggest them. In irony Tennyson would equal Pope, had he not risen above it. The man who wrote "The New Timon and the Poets," and afterwards rebuked himself for so doing, could write another "Dunciad," or, without resort to any models, a still more polished and bitter satire of his own.

Tennyson's original and fastidious art is of itself a theme for an essay. The poet who studies it may well despair; he never can excel it, and is tempted to a reactionary carelessness, trusting to make his individuality felt thereby. Its strength is that of perfection; its weakness, the over-perfection which marks a still-life painter. Here is the absolute sway of metre, compelling every rhyme and measure needful to the thought; here are sinuous alliterations, unique and varying breaks and pauses, winged flights and falls, the glory of sound and colour, everywhere present, or, if missing, absent of the poet's free will. Art so complex was not possible until centuries of literature had passed, and an artist could overlook the field, essay each style, and evolve a metrical result, which should be to that of earlier periods what the music of Meyerbeer and Rossini is to the narrower range of Piccini or Gluck. In Tennyson's artistic conscientiousness, he is the opposite of that compeer who approaches him most nearly in years and strength of intellect, Robert Browning. His gift of language is not so copious as Swinburne's, yet through its use the higher excellence is attained. Let me conclude my remarks upon the Laureate's art with a reference to his unfailing taste and sense of the fitness of things. This is neatly exemplified in the openings, and especially in the endings, of his idylls. "Audley Court" very well illustrates what I mean. Observe, also, the beautiful dedication of his collected works to the Queen, and the solemn and faithful character-painting of the tribute to Prince Albert which forms the prelude to the Idylls of the King. The two dedications are equal to the best ever written, and

each is a poem by itself. They fully sustained the wisdom of Victoria's choice of a successor to

"This laurel greener from the brows
Of him that uttered nothing base."

Leaving the architecture of Tennyson's poetry and coming to the sentiment which it seeks to express, we are struck at once by the fact that an idyllic, or picturesque mode of conveying that sentiment is the one natural to this poet, if not the only one permitted by his limitations. In this he surpasses all the poets since Theocritus; and his work is greater than the Syracusan's, because his thought and period are greater. His eyes are his purveyors; with "wisdom at one entrance quite shut out" he would be helpless. To use the lingo of the phrenologists, his locality is better than his individuality. He does not, like Browning, catch the secret of a master-passion, nor, like the old dramatists, the very life of action; on the contrary, he gives us an ideal picture of an ideal person, but set against a background more tangible than other artists can draw,—making the accessories, and even the atmosphere, convey the meaning of his poem. As we study his verse, and the sound and colour of it enter our souls, we think with him, we partake of his feeling, and are led to regions which he finds himself unable to open for us except in this suggestive way. The fidelity of his accessories is peculiar to the time: realistic, without the Flemish homeliness, true as Pre-Raphaelitism, but mellowed with the atmosphere of a riper art. This idyllic method is not that of the most inspired poets and the most impassioned periods. But, merely as a descriptive writer, who is so delightful as Tennyson? He has the unerring first touch, which in a single line proves the artist; and it justly has been remarked that there is more true English landscape in many an isolated stanza of "In Memoriam" than in the whole of "The Seasons,"—that vaunted descriptive poem of a former century. A paper has been written upon the Lincolnshire scenery depicted in his poems, and we might have others, just as well, upon his marine or highland views. He is a born observer of physical nature, and, whenever he applies an adjective to some object, or passingly alludes to some phenomenon which others have not noted, is almost infallibly correct. Possibly he does this too methodically, but his opponents cannot deny that his out-door rambles are guided by their eloquent apostle's "Lamp of Truth."

His limitations are nearly as conspicuous as his abundant gifts. They are indicated, first, by a style pronounced to the degree of mannerism, and, secondly by failure, until within a very recent date, to produce dramatic work of the genuine kind.

With respect to his style, it may be said that Tennyson—while objective in the variety of his themes, and in ability to separate his

own experience from their development—is the most subjective of poets in the distinguishable flavour of his language and rhythm. Reading him you might not guess his life and story,—the reverse of which is true with Byron, whom I take as a familiar example of the subjective in literature; nevertheless, it is impossible to observe a single line, or an entire specimen, of the Laureate's poems, without feeling that they are in the handwriting of the same master, or of some disciple who has caught his fascinating and contagious style.

I speak of his second limitation, with a full knowledge that many claim a dramatic crown for the author of the "Northern Farmer," "Tithonus." "St. Simeon Stylites,"—for the poet of the Round Table and the Holy Grail. But isolated studies are not sufficient: a group of living men and women is necessary to broad dramatic action. Tennyson forces his characters to adapt themselves to preconceived, statuesque ideals of his own. His chief success is with those in humble life; in "Enoch Arden," and elsewhere, he has very sweetly depicted the emotions of simple natures, rarely at a sublime height or depth of passion. He also draws—with an easy touch occasionally found in the prose of the author of "The Warden"—a group of sturdy, refined, comfortable fellows upon their daily rambles, British and modern in their wholesome talk. But the true dramatist instinctively portrays either exceptional characters, or ordinary beings in impassioned and extraordinary moods. This Tennyson rarely essays to do, except when presenting imaginary heroes of a visioned past. A great master of contemplative, descriptive, or lyrical verse, he falls short in that combination of action and passion which we call dramatic, and often gives us a series of marvellous tableaux in lieu of exalted speech and deeds....

M. Taine's chapter upon Tennyson shows an intelligent perception of the Laureate's relations to his time, and especially to England; but though containing a fine interlude upon the perennial freshness of a poet and the zest which makes nature a constant surprise to him,—declaring that the poet, in the presence of this world, is as the first man on the first day,—with all this excellence the chapter fails to rightly appreciate Tennyson, and overestimates Alfred de Musset in comparison. M. Taine's failure, I think, is due to the fact that no one, however successful in mastering a foreign language, can fully enter into that nicety of art which is the potent witchery of Tennyson's verse. The minute distinction between one poem and another, where the ideas are upon a level, and the difference is one of essential flavour, a foreigner loses without perceiving his loss. Precisely this delicacy of aroma separates Tennyson from other masters of verse. An English school-girl will see in his work a beauty that wholly escapes the most accomplished Frenchman: the latter may have ten times her knowledge of the language,

but she "hears a voice he cannot hear" and *feels* an influence he never can fairly understand. Again, M. Taine does not allow credit for the importance of the works actually produced by Tennyson. Largeness and proportion go for something in edifices; and although De Musset, the errant, impassioned, suffering Parisian, had the sacred fire, and gave out burning flashes here and there, his light was fitful, not long sustained, and we think rather of what one so gifted ought to have accomplished than of what he actually did.

But Taine's catholicity, and the very fact that he is a foreigner have protected him, on the other hand, from the overweening influence of Tennyson's art, that holds us

> "Above the subject, as strong gales
> Hold swollen clouds from raining";

have made him a wiser judge of the poet's intellectual and imaginative positon. In this matter he is like a deaf man, watching a battle, undisturbed by the bewildering power of sound. His remarks upon the limitations of a "comfortable, luxurious, English muse are not without reason; all in all, he has a just idea of Tennyson's representative attitude in the present state of British thought and art. He has laid too little stress upon the difference between Tennyson and Byron, by observing which we gather a clearer estimate of the former's genius than in any other way......................

Reviewing our analysis of his genius and works, we find in Alfred Tennyson the true poetic irritability, a sensitiveness increased by his secluded life, and displayed from time te time in "the least little touch of the spleen"; we perceive him to be the most faultless of modern poets in technical execution, but one whose verse is more remarkable for artistic perfection than for dramatic action and inspired fervour. His adroitness surpasses his invention. Give him a theme, and no poet can handle it so exquisitely,—yet we feel that with the Malory legends to draw upon he could go on writing "Idylls of the King" forever. We find him objective in the spirit of his verse, but subjective in the decided manner of his style; possessing a sense of proportion, based upon the highest analytic and synthetic powers,—a faculty that can harmonize the incongruous thoughts, scenes, and general details of a composite period; in thought resembling Wordsworth, in art instructed by Keats; but rejecting the passion of Byron, or having nothing in his nature that aspires to it; finally, an artist so perfect in a widely extended range, that nothing of his work can be spared, and, in this respect, approaching Horace and outvying Pope; not one of the great wits nearly allied to madness, yet possibly to be accepted as a wiser poet, serene above the frenzy of the storm; certainly to be regarded, in time to come, as all in all, the fullest representative of the refined, speculative, complex Victorian age.

[*From the same.*]

It is in the "Œnone" that we discover Tennyson's earliest adaptation of that *refrain* which was a striking beauty of the pastoral elegiac verse.

"O mother Ida, hearken ere I die,"

is the analogue of (Theocr., II).

"See thou, whence came my love, O lady Moon";

of the refrain to the lament of Daphnis (Theocr., I).

"Begin, dear Muse, begin the woodland song";

and of the recurrent wail in the "Epitaph of Bion" (Mosch., III)

"Begin, Sicilian Muses, begin the song of your sorrow!"

Throughout the poem the Syracusan manner and feeling are strictly and nobly maintained; and, while we are considering "Œnone," a few points of more exact resemblance may be noted:—

The Thalysia (Theocr, VII, 21-23.)

"Whither at noonday dost thou drag thy feet?
For now the lizard sleeps upon the wall,
The crested lark is wandering no more."

The Enchantress (Theocr., II, 38-41).

"Lo now the sea is silent, and the winds
Are hushed. Not silent is the wretchedness
Within my breast; but I am all aflame
With love for him who made me thus forlorn,—
A thing of evil, neither maid nor wife."

The Young Herdsman (Theocr., XX, 19, 20; 30, 31.)

"O shepherds, tell me truth! Am I not fair?
Hath some God made me, then, from what I was,
Off-hand, another being?.........
Along the mountains all the women call
Me beautiful, all love me."

Œnone.

"For now the noonday quite holds the hill;
The grasshopper is silent in the grass:
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Rests like a shadow, and the cicala sleeps.
The purple flowers droop: the golden bee
Is lily-cradled: I alone awake.
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,
And I am all aweary of my life.
....

"Yet mother Ida, hearken ere I die
Fairest—why fairest wife? Am I not fair?
My love hath told me so a thousand times
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday," etc.

"The Lotos-Eaters," another imaginative presentment of an antique theme,—full of Tennyson's excellences no less than of early mannerisms since forgone,—while Gothic in some respects, is charged from beginning to end with the effects and very language of the Greek pastoral poets. As in "Œnone," there is no consecutive imitation of any one idyll; but the work is curiouly filled out with passages borrowed here and there, as the growth of the poem recalled them at random to the author's mind. The idylls of Theocritus often have been subjected to this process; first, by Virgil, in several of whose eclogues the component parts were culled from his master, as one selects from a flower-plot a white rose, a red, and then a sprig of green, to suit the exigencies of colour, while the wreath grows under the hand. Pope, among moderns, has followed the method of Virgil, as may be observed in either of his four "Pastorals." The process used by Pope is tame, artificisl, and avowed; in "The Lotos-Eaters," it is subtle, masterly; yet of a completeness which only parallel quotations can display.

The Argonauts (Theocr., XIII) come in the afternoon unto a land of cliffs and thickets and streams; of meadows set with sedge, whence they cut for their couches sharp flowering-rush and the low galingale. "In the afternoon" the Lotos-Eaters "come unto a land" where

"Through mountain clefts the dale
Was seen far inland, and the yellow dawn
Bordered with palm, and many a winding vale
And meadow, set with slender galingale."

Except the landscape, all this, in either poem, is after Homer, from the ninth book of the Odyssey. The "Choric Song" follows, of them to whom

"Evermore
Most weary seemed the sea, weary the oar,
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam";

and in this, the feature of the poem, are certain coincidences to which I refer:—

Europa (Mosch., II, 3, 4).

"When sleep, that sweeter on the eyelids lies
Than honey, and doth fetter down the eyes
With gentle bond."

The Wayfarers (Theocr., V, 50, 51).

"Here, if you come, your feet shall tread on wool,
The fleece of lambs, softer than downy sleep."

Ibid (45—49).

"Here are the oaks, and here is galingale,
Here bees are sweetly humming near their hives;
Here are twin fountains of cool water; here
The birds are prattling on the trees,—the shade
Is deeper than beyond; and here the pine
From overhead casts down to us its cones."

Ibid (31, 34).

"More sweetly will you sing
Propt underneath the olive, in these groves.
Here are cool waters plashing down, and here
The grasses spring; and here, too, is a bed
Of leafage, and the locusts babble here."

The Choice (Mosch., V, 4—13).

"When the gray deep has sounded, and the sea
Climbs up in foam and far the loud waves roar,
I seek for land and trees, and flee the brine,
And earth to me is welcome: the dark wood
Delights me, where, although the great wind blow,
The pine-tree sings. An evil life indeed
The fisherman's, whose vessel is his home,
The sea his toil, the fish his wandering prey.
But sweet to me to sleep beneath the plane
Thick-leaved; and near me I would love to hear
The babble of the spring, that murmuring
Perturbs him not, but is the woodman's joy."

The Lotos-Eaters.

"Music, that gentlier on the spirit lies
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
And through the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.
....

Lo! sweetened with the summer light
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
....

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,
How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)
....

To watch the emerald-colored water falling
Through many a woven acanthus-wreath divine!

Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretched out beneath the pine.

....

Hateful is the dark blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark blue sea.

....

Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave?

....

All day the wind breathes low with mellower tone.

....

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half dream.

[*From Stopford Brook's "Tennyson."*]

Tennyson, when he worked on natural scenery outside of his own land, was not a good landscapist. Not only had he little sympathy with southern Nature, but he also required to assimilate during long years of companionship the scenery he described, before he could, with his full power, embody it in verse. But the impressions he received in travel were brief. They did not soak into him, and he could not reproduce them well. This, I said, was the case when he painted direct from Nature.

But it is not the case when he invented, when he painted from the vision he had of a landscape in his own soul. He saw it, rising like an exhalation into form around his figures. He took the cloud-shapes, and composed them slowly; rejecting this, accepting that, till he had got the background which he needed for Œnone, or Ulysses, or the mild-eyed Lotos-Eaters. Then his nature-painting, wherever the scene is placed, is fine in itself, and necessarily fits the subject. Of course, he does not stand alone in such invention. Every poet, as every painter, practises, more or less, this part of his art. Wordsworth and Walter Scott are almost solitary in their habit, rarely infringed, of painting all their landscape on the spot, direct from Nature. But then they did not take subjects outside of their own country and their own time, or, if they did, as when Wordsworth took a classical subject like *Laodamia*, they did not put in a landscape..............

Such invented landscape is sometimes done from a previous study from Nature which is worked up afterwards into a picture, and of this the landscape in the *Œnone* of 1833 is an instance. At other times, it is a picture composed out of various impressions of diverse places brought together into one landscape, and this is the case with a number of the landscapes in *The Revolt of Islam*, and in the *Prometheus Unbound*. It is sometimes used to illustrate the

human passions treated of in the poem, the landscape echoing as it were the feelings of the persons, even the progress of their thoughts. Spenser does this echoing landscape with great directness, as in the description of the bower of Acrasia, or of the Cave of Mammon, or of the haunt of Despair. Tennyson does it with great deliberation in the *Lotos-Eaters*.................

In classical poems, the landscape must of course be invented unless, like the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood, the poet should go to Troy or Ithaca, and describe things as they are now, in order to gain local colour. Since the days of Pre-Raphaelitism, some poets have used this way, but for the most part they invent; and Tennyson saw his Lotos Island and the Mount of Ida only "with the intellectual eye." In Œnone, however, he began with direct description, with his eye upon the scene. It was a valley in the Pyrenees, we are told, which he chose as background for his betrayed maiden, for Paris and the goddesses, when he wrote of them in 1833; and here is this first landscape:

> There is a dale in Ida, lovelier
> Than any in old Ionia, beautiful
> With emerald slopes of sunny sward, that lean
> Above the loud glen-river, which hath worn
> A path thro' steepdown granite walls below
> Mantled with flowering tendril-twine. In front,
> The cedar-shadowy valleys ope wide.
> Far seen, high over all the Godbuilt wall
> And many a snowy columned range divine,
> Mounted with awful sculptures—men and gods,
> The work of gods—bright on the dark blue sky
> The windy citadel of Ilion
> Shone like the crown of Troas.

As Tennyson thought of this, he saw how poor it was in comparison with what he might do if he chose. The blank verse halts; a hurly-burly of vowels like "Than any in old Ionia" is a sorrowful thing; there is no careful composition of the picture; the things described have not that vital connection one with the other which should enable the imaginative eye to follow them step by step down the valley till it opens on the plain where Troy stands white, below its citadel.

Now observe what an artist who has trained his powers can make of his first rough sketch, when, neglecting what he has seen, he invents and composes with imaginative care. Here is the picture of 1842 made out of the sketch of 1833:

> There lies a vale in Ida lovelier
> Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
> The swimming vapour slopes athwart the glen,
> Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,
> And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand

The lawns and meadow-ledges midway down
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars
The long brook falling thro' the clov'n ravine
In cataract after cataract to the sea.
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus
Stands up and takes the morning: but in front
The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,
The crown of Troas.

The verse is now weighty and poised and nobly paused—yet it moves swiftly enough. The landscape now is absolutely clear, and it is partly done by cautious additions to the original sketch. Moreover, being seen by the imagination in an hour of joy, it is far truer in its details to Nature than the previous sketch. In any invented landscape, though the whole has not been seen in Nature, the parts must be true to her ways; and nothing can image better the actual thing than that phrase concerning a lonely peak at dawn, that it "takes the morning"; nor the lifting and slow absorption of the mists of night when the sun slants warm into the pines of the glen, than those slow-wrought, concentrated lines about the mountain vapour.

That is one illustration of my point, and in this instance the original has been expanded. I will now compare another piece of the *Œnone* of 1833 with its new form in 1842. Here there is no expansion, there is contraction. The original was too diffuse: it is now concised with admirable force. This is the original description of the coming of the goddesses:

It was the deep mid-noon; one silvery cloud
Had lost his way among the piney hills.
They came—all three—the Olympian goddesses:
Naked they came to the smooth-swarded bower,
Lustrous with lily flower, violet-eyed
Both white and blue, with lotetree-fruit thickset,
Shadowed with singing pine; and all the while,
Above, the over-wandering ivy and vine
This way and that in many a wild festoon
Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs
With bunch and berry and flower thro' and thro',

And this is the new thing, with its one line—

"And at their feet the crocus brake like fire."

which is the centre light and passion of the whole, which fills the scene, not only with golden glory, but with the immortal power of the Gods, before whose deity Nature blossoms into worship:

It was the deep mind-noon: one silvery cloud
Had lost his way between the piney sides
Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came,

Naked they came to the smooth-swarded bower,
And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,
Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose,
And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,
This way and that, in many a wild festoon
Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs
With bunch and berry and flower thro' and thro'.

Nothing can be more careful than the composition of this background for the goddesses. Some have said that it is a little too pictorial for poetry; but we will be thankful that we have a piece of work of a kind which was then new in poetry, and that it is splendidly done.*

But there is something more to say. In the original cast, the scenery of the poem was not fully inwoven with *Œnone's* mind. It did not fit her or feel with her as subtly and intimately as he wished; she did not seem to have lived with it in long association—a thing Tennyson felt was necessary for himself if he were to describe a landscape perfectly. Nor were the mountains or the woods or the gorge in the first draft deep enough or high enough for her passion or for the fateful meeting of the goddesses, or sombre enough for her misery or for the fate of Troy, which lies beyond the poem and yet is contained within its action.

To fulfil and embody in the landscape these various hues of passion, to make the landscape more absolutely one with them, Tennyson set himself to work in the new poem, and he did it by adding a touch here and a touch there, by describing the landscape—a trick of his which he first used in *Mariana*—at different times of the day with a greater fulness than before, until at last we can no more divide Œnone from the Nature in which she is placed than we can separate the soul from the body of a friend. She is involved in the Nature which surrounds her, and the Nature in which she lives has mixed itself with her thought and her passion. Her constant cry, even in the first draft, proves this:

O mother Ida, harken ere I die!

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* See how Tennyson has left out the thoroughly bad line—"They came—all three—the Olympian goddesses"—how he has made melodious the halting lines, such as "Both white and blue, with lotetree-fruit thickset"; and how the confusion of colour and flowers, the over-description of the flowers, and the addition of the pine-groves above the bower, all of which take our eyes away from the goddesses, are omitted or reduced to simplicity. Moreover he knew clearly the good things in his original verses and did not touch those admirable four last lines. He may have had in his ear Milton's "with the gadding vine o'ergrown," but, if so, how delightfully he has fulfilled that which Milton only touched with a single adjective.

This power of forging together Nature and the heart of man adds emotion to the skill with which the occasional figures are placed in the landscape, and to the vividness with which they are suddenly, almost flamingly, struck upon the sight. I need not quote the splendid image of Aphrodite in this poem, but here is Paris issuing from the wood:

> Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,
> Leading a jet-black goat, white-horned, white-hooved,
> Came up from reedy Simois all alone.
> ....White-breasted like a star
> Fronting the dawn he moved; a leopard skin
> Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny hair
> Cluster'd about his temples like a god's;
> And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-bow brightens
> When the wind blows the foam... ....

Such is the invented landscape in *Œnone.* But fine landscape and fine figure-drawing are not enough to make a fine poem. Human interest, human passion, must be greater than Nature and dominate the subject. Indeed, all this lovely scenery is nothing in comparison with the sorrow and love of Œnone, recalling her lost love in the places where once she lived in joy. This is the main humanity of the poem. But there is more. Her common sorrow is lifted almost into the proportions of Greek tragedy by its cause and by its results. It is caused by a quarrel in Olympus and the mountain nymph is sacrificed without a thought to the vanity of the careless gods. That is an ever recurring tragedy in human history. Moreover, the personal tragedy deepens when we see the fateful dread in Œnone's heart that she will far away in time hold her lover's life in her hands, and refuse to give it back to him—a fatality that Tennyson treated before he died. And secondly, Œnone's sorrow is lifted into dignity by the vast results which flowed from its cause. Behind it were the mighty fates of Troy, the ten years' battle, the anger of Achilles, the wanderings of Ulysses, the tragedy of Agamemnon, the founding of Rome, and the three great epics of the ancient world.

This was then a subject well-chosen, holding in it mighty human thoughts and destinies, and these are living in the poem. But there is something more to say. Tennyson, in the way I have already explained, makes all these classic poems fit in with modern times and instruct the conscience or enhance the aspiration of those who read his work. Wordsworth did this in his *Laodamia* and *Dion.* Keats did not do it, Greek as were his subjects. He loved their beauty, not their lessons to mankind. Tennyson does give what Wordsworth does not—their sensuous beauty—but he also gives their universal lesson. And in *Œnone* he lays down that which in all his poetry and in his character also was one of the first

of thoughts to him, not only the foundation of life and government, of true power, and, in the end, of beauty, but also the root of the glory and strength of England as he wished her to be. This is held in the speech of Pallas, and is the centre of the poem:

Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.
Yet not for power (power of herself
Would come uncall'd for) but to live by law,
Acting the law we live by without fear;
And, because right is right, to follow right
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence
I woo thee not with gifts.
Sequel of guerdon could not alter me
To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,
So shalt thou find me fairest.

*   *   *   *

Oh, rest thee sure
That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee,
So that my vigour, wedded to thy blood,
Shall strike within thy pulses like a god's,
To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks,
Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow
Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown will,
Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,
Commeasure perfect freedom.

In these thoughts we pierce down to one of the roots of Tennyson. On those thoughts he built his patriotic poetry. In order to enhance those thoughts, he built as their contrast and opposite the character of the hero in the two *Locksley Halls.* On those lines he draws the character of King Arthur. On those lines in a hundred poems, he lays down what he considers to be the greatness of England, the greatness of mankind. Athena in the heart, to use Ruskin's phrase, is a universal need; and the expression of this thought of Tennyson's makes *Œnone* not only a classic but a modern poem.

In the *Lotos-Eaters* the landscape is also invented. There is no description in the *Odyssey* of the land of "the Lotos-Eaters, who eat a flowery food." It is only said that "whoso ate the honey-sweet fruit of the lotos had no desire to bring tidings to the ship, or to come back to it, but chose to dwell among the lotos-eating folk, and, forgetful of returning, fed upon the lotos." This is the source of Tennyson's poem. But in a nature-loving world like ours and midst of that modern poetic temper which makes Nature reflect humanity, so simple a treatment is not enough for Tennyson. He drives the bark of Ulysses into a shallow bay opening up shoreward into a deep valley bordered with cliffs, down whose sides thin streams of silken mist are falling, and at the head of the valley three snow-crowned mountain-peaks are rosy in the sunset. The vale is filled with the

soft murmur of a river which glides at last through the yellow sand of the seashore into the sea over which the sun is setting. This is his landscape, and everywhere below the pines, in every creek and alley, on every lawn, beside every stream, the lotos blooms and sheds its yellow dust upon the weary wind.

But the landscape itself is not enough. It must be put into harmony with the soft oblivion which the lotos brings, with the rest and slumber of life dreaming that it dreams. So the air is languid, and the moon has completed its waxing and is full-faced; and the streams fall in slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, and their sheets of foam are slumbrous, and the snow on the rosy peaks is very old, and the amber light dreams, and the waves curve tenderly upon the land, and the leaf and the apple on the trees round to fulness and fall, full ripe and all the winds and sounds are low. Nature, like the indwellers of the land, has eaten of the ind lent forgetfulness of the flower. This is the poet's way, and he had his examples of this kind of work in Spenser's Cave of Sleep and in Thomson's *Castle of Indolence;* but I think he has excelled them both.

As the main thought of the poem, it is, like that of these classical poems in general, of great simplicity, and its feeling felt at all times of human life. "Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things? Death is the end of life, why then should life be labour?

> Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
> To war with evil? Is there any peace
> In ever climbing up the climbing wave?

Enough of action, of trouble on trouble, pain on pain. No more of pursuit, of mending what is broken, of the strife of love. To dream to sleep:

> Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

The first sketch of this thought was in the *Sea Fairies* of 1830, and a lightly treated thing it was. Then that was made into *The Lotos-Eaters* of 1833, the first part of which is kept in the recast of the poem of 1842. But in the latter part, a great and vital change was made. First, the passage

> Dear is the memory of our wedded lives, &c.

was added, and it is a passage which doubles the human interest of the poem: and, secondly, instead of the jingling, unintellectual merely fanciful ending of the poem of 1833, every image of which wanders hither and thither without clear purpose and weakens the impression of the previous part, the poem thus closing in a feeble anti-climax, we have the weighty, solemn, thoughtful, classic close, embodying the Epicurean conception of the gods, bringing all Olympus down into harmony with the indifferent dreaming of the

Lotos-eaters, but leaving in our minds the sense of a dreadful woe tending on those that dream; for what the gods do with impunity, man may not do. Yet, even the Lotos-eating Gods inevitable fate awaits.

This is the work of a great artist, and in this steady improvement of his poems Tennyson stands almost alone. Other poets, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, did not recast their poems in this wholesale fashion, and the additions or changes which they made were by no means always improvements. Tennyson working with his clear sense of what was artistic, and with the stately steadiness which belonged to his character, not only improved but doubled the value of the poems he altered. Many persons would like another kind of artist, one who does at a rush what he desires to do, or one who could not go back on what he had done, because new things occur to him incessantly; and this our liking is a matter of temperament. But Tennyson was built in another fashion. What he did was wholly in harmony with the man, and our business is not to wish the artist different, but to find out what he is, and to love him within the necessary limits of his sphere. In that way we get his good, and are not troubled by his weaknesses.

The last of the classical poems in the volume of 1842 is, from contemplation's point of view, the best. This is the *Ulysses*. The scene is set on the shore of Ithaca, at the port. The time is evening. The moon is rising and the sea is gloomed by the shadows of the coming night. There is no description of the landscape, but enough is given to make us feel the time and place. Yet when Tennyson touches Nature in this poem it is done with even more mastery than in *Œnone*; with extraordinary brevity and force. A whole world of ocean weather and of sea experience is in the last two lines of this:

> All times I have enjoy'd
> Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
> That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
> Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
> Vext the dim sea;

And I quote the three lines which follow, not only because the Nature in them strikes the note of that profound melancholy which lay underneath the intense and hopeless curiosity of the Renaissance —the same kind of curiosity which Ulysses feels in this poem—but also because the second line is one of Tennyson's finest examples of sound echoing sense:

> The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
> The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs; the deep
> Moans round with many voices.

But the dominant interest here, more than in *Œnone* and *The Lotos-Eaters*, is the human interest—the soul that cannot rest, whom

the unknown always allures to action—the image of the exact opposite of the temper of mind of the Lotos-Eaters.

> Yet all experience is an arch where thro'
> Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades,
> For ever and for ever when I move.
> How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
> To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!
> As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life
> Were all too little,—and of one to me
> Little remains: but every hour is saved
> From that eternal silence, something more,
> A bringer of new things; and vile it were
> For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
> And this gray spirit yearning in desire
> To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
> Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

There never was a better description of the temper of the higher spirits of the Renaissance in Italy. We listen to the very soul of Leonardo da Vinci.

This too is Tennyson. I have heard it said that, in this poem, he drew the portrait of his own mind. I can well believe it, and it is a noble temper with which to step into the fuller manhood of middle life. Indeed, he never thought it too late to seek in his own art a newer world. Even at eighty years he took new subjects and tried new ways in poetry. The cry of his Ulysses was the cry of his old age:

> Tho' much is taken, much abides: and tho'
> We are not now that strength which in old days
> Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are;
> One equal temper of heroic hearts,
> Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
> To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

Thus he returned to the Greek, as Keats had done; but not as Keats, only for the sake of the beauty of Greece, but also for the sake of the ethic power of her stories; not like Keats, that he might find in ancient times a refuge from the baseness of the present, but that he might bring thoughts out of the past to rejoice and illuminate the present. The speech of Pallas to Paris is spoken to England: the song of the Lotos-eater is a warning to the drifters and dreamers of our world; in the thoughts of Ulysses is held the power and the glory of England. Nevertheless, though these poems have an ethical direction, it is subordinate to their first direction, which is to represent the beauty in their subjects. No one who has any sense of art will presume to accuse them of being didactic rather than artistic......

[*From George Brimley's Essays.*]

The pre-eminence of the painter reappears in *Œnone.* If the poet's object had been to tell a moving story of love, and wrong, and grief, he would not have chosen for his heroine a mythological nymph, nor have thrown his incidents back to the siege of Troy, and among beings whose existence is no longer believed in. As little is his purpose, in treating Greek mythology, akin to Shelley's, who clothes in its forms a sentimental nature-philosophy, and a pantheistical worship. *Œnone* is more akin in spirit to *Endymion* and *Hyperion;* but its verse is more majestic, and its luxuriant pictorial richness more controlled by definite conception, more articulated by fine drawing, than even the latter and greater of Keats's two poems. Gorgeous mountain and figure painting stand here as the predominant aim as clearly as in any picture by Titian or Turner; only poetry will not lose her prerogative of speech, and will paint her mountains and her figures in a medium of passion to which the artist upon canvas vainly aspires. Round Ida and its valleys, round Troas and its windy citadel, Œnone can pour the enchantment of her memories of love and grief. To her can the naked goddesses—painted as Rubens could not paint them,—life, motion, and floating lights,—utter celestial music, and grand thoughts ally themselves with splendid pictures. If the wish will force its way, that Greek mythology might be left at peace in its tomb, and that a harp so strung to passion and to thought should pour the spell of its music upon a theme in which the imagination should harmonise and interpret the life of the men and women about us, we can but answer, that the deeper music will yet beat itself out,—that this is but prelude, showing the artist's power and perfecting his hand.

The Lotos-Eaters carries Tennyson's tendency to pure æstheticism to an extreme point. It is picture and music, and nothing more. The writer did not suppose he was writing *Hamlet,* or solving 'the riddle of the painful earth.' Nor must we go to the work with that demand upon it. If music and picture—the feelings of imaginary beings, in a pure region of imagination, perfectly presented in rhythmical language that takes the formative impulse of the feeling, as falling water does of the forces that draw it into a flashing curve—have no charm for any mind, that mind can find no interest in *The Lotos-Eaters.* To attempt to treat it as an allegory, which figures forth the tendency to abandon the battle of life, to retire from a fruitless ever-renewed struggle,—to read it as we should read *The Pilgrim's Progress,* and look out for facts of actual experience which answer to its images, is as monstrous and perverse as it would be to test a proposition of geometry by its rhythm and imagery. A mood of feeling, of course, it represents, and feeling dependent on, and directed to distinct objects,—in this latter

respect alone differing from music. We may, of course, too, apply the mood of feeling thus depicted to the real events of life, and translate it into the actual language of men under the influence of 'mild-eyed melancholy.' So we might with a sonata of Beethoven's, —but the application is ours, and not the composer's; and if we attempt to limit the composer to our interpretation, rather than give ourselves up to his free inspiration from a purely musical impulse, all we get by it is, generally, a very poor verbal poem, instead of a noble work that does not, however, belonging to the region of articulate speech.

[*From Tainsh's "Study of Tennyson."*]

That the body of beauty is found everywhere throughout his writings, there can be small doubt. Of mere sound beauty the poems are full; in metrical beauty and variety they are singularly rich; the very rhymes oftentimes hold you in surprise at their abundance and spontaneity. The eighteenth canto of *Maud* and the *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* displayed a wealth and beauty of rhyming almost unmatched in English poetry.

In the musical combinations of his words, Tennyson is equaled, I think, among English poets, only by Spenser and Shelley, unless, indeed, Keats may be added. And, over and above its music, there is a certain suggestive power about much of our poet's language altogether apart from its meaning, which is especially worthy of notice. The power comes partly out of the matching of sense by sound, but it is not wholly due to this. It is partly this, and it is partly the effect of metre, but it is more than both. The words seem to bear the same relation to the meaning or sentiment underlying them, that a human face does to the underlying heart and mind. The fact will make itself felt by every lover of those poems in *In Memoriam* and *Maud* especially....................

I spoke of the vague pictorial power of Tennyson's language. A step on from this leads us to the observation of the keen flashing power of his words, due to their often presenting, instantaneously and vividly, just those qualities in the thought or the thing, pertinent to the situation in which that thought or thing presents itself. Epithets form the crucial test of the poet. Men's nouns and verbs agree much more than their adjectives and adverbs. The poet and the poetaster see the same things and write about the same things also. But the poetaster sees only the general characteristics of the thing, and to express these the noun alone will suffice. But he dare not use the noun alone, for in doing so he would reveal to himself and to all men that of the true poet's power of seeing he had none. So the poetaster is very much given to epithets; but his epithets are either such as by immemorial usage are accredited sound and appropriate (only that by their familiarity they have lost the power of epithets, and, at best, are not the poetaster's any more than they are reader's),

or else they are windy, blustering epithets that but cheat the poetaster and his weakest readers into the belief that they add something to the meaning of the noun about which they shake so turbulently. The epithets of the true poet, on the other hand, are full of revealing power. All men see as much of a thing as the noun expresses. The poet sees more, and his epithet reveals the more which he sees. The power of seeing this "more" is perhaps *the* distinctive power of the poet, or, more generally, of the artist. The power of learning this "more" from the epithet is perhaps the chief and the rarest faculty in the poet's reader. Were this faculty less rare, there would be less confounding of poets and poetasters. The careful reading of such poems as *Godiva*, *the Gardener's Daughter*, and the *Morte d'Arthur* will make clear what is meant by the foregoing remarks.

In studying Tennyson's epithets, then, we should be studying his seeing faculty—his real and personal knowledge of nature and all outer things. Such a study would be rich in both teaching and training—in teaching us what the poet has seen for us; in training us to see for ourselves. The power of seeing deeper than the noun qualities so to say, is very rare. The man of science teaches us to see deeper; so also does the poet. But except the man of science or the poet be the very highest of his order, they teach us to see very different things. The mere man of science seeks for appearances indicating structure; the mere poet looks for beauty. But the highest man of science sees also with the poet's eyes; the great poet sees with the eyes of the man of science, as well as with his poet eyes. Each is a great teacher in the art of the true observation of nature and all outer things.

Tennyson's sympathy with science is remarkable, and colours all his poetry. But it does not cause him to cease to be the poet-observer. All his seeings are transmitted into beauty, or symbol of higher truth. But though, to some readers the beauty and the symbolism were nothing, none the less his guidance in the art of observing would be invaluable. A friend of mine went through his poems, marking all his references to flowers. The study was a valuable one, and many similar experiments might suggest themselves to the thoughtful reader. The precision of our poet's observations is everywhere remarkable, and, oftentimes, his most incidental references to natural objects are full of point and instruction. He sees, at once, with the precision of the man of science and the intensity of the poet. I do not attempt to give illustrations, for it will make itself apparent to any thoughtful student who turns his attention to the matter.

Possessing an intimate knowledge of nature, Tennyson puts his knowledge to a distinctive use. He rarely makes it the subject of his poetry. Everywhere his poetry is about man. Yet everywhere

nature enters largely into his poetry. It enters, too, in a close and peculiar connection with the human characters which form the subjects of the poetry. He does not draw the man, and then draw the nature around him; but he enters into the man, and sees nature through his eyes, nature, at the same time, so adapting herself to the mood of the man, that her spirit and his seem one. This relation I have expressed by the name *sensuo-sympathetic*. There is nothing like it in the poetry of Wordsworth, or of Shelley, or of Keats. In each of these, nature, after one manner or another, masters the man. In Keats she subdues him; in Shelley she transfigures him; in Wordsworth she is his teacher. But in Tennyson she is one with him. As she presents herself to his senses, she is in absolute sympathy with him. His pain and fear, his hopes and questionings, are hers. All through *In Memoriam* one feels this. In such poems as *Mariana* and the *Lotos-Eaters* the spirit of the picture would remain the same, though the human beings were struck out. In *Claribel* the picture is made by nature, yet it is not a natural but a human situation that is pictured. *Maud* is full of the same *sensuo-sympathetic* relation between man and nature. It is altogether characteristic of Tennyson, and it gives a reality to his similes which otherwise they could not have. You feel, not that he is bringing together two things that happen to have an external resemblance upon some particular point, but that he is bringing out a harmony between things the which you had not before perceived. In such a simile as

> "She did not weep,
> But o'er her meek eyes came a happy mist,
> Like that which kept the heart of Eden green,
> Before the useful trouble of the rain,"

there seems to be something deeper than an accidental resemblance...

The *Lotos-Eaters* and *Ulysses* form a pair contrasting as strongly as do *Sir Galahad* and *St. Agnes' Eve*. And the contrast is of a similar character too, intense activity as opposed to absolute quiescence and passivity. But in the Greek pair of portraits there is no religious element; and so, while the activity of Sir Galahad becomes enthusiasm, that of Ulysses approaches nearer to restlessness; and while the passivity of St. Agnes becomes mystical rapture, that of the Lotos-Eaters is half-despairing melancholy. The pairs contrast still further. Galahad's activity is noble, and St. Agnes' passivity is noble too, for both come out of a deliberate surrender of the heart and life to high faith and hope and aims. Ulysses's activity and the Lotos-Eaters' passivity both come out of motives that may be found in the circle of human thoughts and wishes. So, in this case, while the activity may be noble in its measure, the passivity must be contemptible, for it is the surrender of all effort and high aim—the abnegation of true humanity.

In *The Lotos-Eaters* is seen very strongly marked Tennyson's special use of nature, which is also, I believe, the Greek use of nature in relation to art. The essence of the Greek spirit, in this matter, is the identification of nature with the emotions and passions, the joys and sorrows of humanity. The gods of Greek mythology are many of them, at the same time personified phases of nature and incarnated human passions. Between man and nature the sympathy seems to be so intense that some common symbol will express them both. In *The Lotos-Eaters* one scarcely knows whether to say that nature sympathises with the men, or that the men sympathise with nature—the two together form one perfect picture of absolute passivity. This is what I have spoken of elsewhere, and have called our poet's *sensuo-sympathetic* use of nature. Throughout his poetry nature not only feels with man, she thinks with him, doubts with him, believes with him. She does not put on an outward seeming to match his mood, but she so identifies herself with him that the passion and the pain, the doubt and the struggle, the hope and the conquest are as much hers as his. She is not wise, has not great lessons to teach him, as in Wordsworth, yet, oftentimes, the thoughts and feelings seem to be of her suggesting, and man rather joins in than initiates the yearning and the effort. From *The Lotos-Eaters* up to *In Memoriam* this sensuo-sympathetic use of nature is to be found in our poet, and this characteristic at once distinguishes him among modern poets, and renders him the most accomplished restorer of the spirit of classic art.

Œnone is warmer. It is still strictly classic, but there is more emotion in it—it is more strongly human. In *Tithonus* you witness the passion and despair of a god; *Œnone* is wholly a woman. You could weep for Tithonus, but you cannot imagine him shedding tears for himself. Œnone says—

> "My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,
> My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,
> And I am all aweary of my life."

But that which most distinguishes *Œnone* from the other classic reproductions is the moral significance infused into it. A man might take as a maxim for his life-guidance—

> "Self reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
> These three alone lead life to sovereign power.
> Yet not for power (power of herself
> Would come uncalled for), but to live by law,
> Acting the law we live by without fear,
> And because right is right, to follow right
> Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence."

[*From Roden's "Essays on Poetry and Poets."*]

Mr. G. Brimley was the first, I believe, to point out the distinctive peculiarity of Lord Tennyson's treatment of landscape. It is treated by him dramatically; that is to say, the details of it are selected so as to be interpretative of the particular mood or emotion he wishes to represent. Thus, in the two Marianas, they are painted with the minute distinctness appropriate to the morbid and sickening observation of the lonely woman, whose attention is distracted by no cares, pleasures, or satisfied affections. That is a pregnant remark, a key to unlock a good deal of Tennyson's work with. Byron and Shelley, though they are carried out of themselves in contemplating Nature, do not, I think, often take her as interpreter of moods alien to their own. In Wordsworth's "Excursion," it is true, Margaret's lonely grief is thus delineated through the neglect of her garden and the surroundings of her cottage; yet this is not so characteristic a note of his Nature poetry. In the "Miller's Daughter" and the "Gardener's Daughter" the lovers would be little indeed without the associated scene so germane to the incidents narrated, both as congenial setting of the picture for a spectator, and as virtually fused with the emotion of the lovers; while never was more lovely landscape-painting of the gentle order than in the "Gardener's Daughter"..................

In his second volume, indeed, the poet's art was well mastered, for here we find "The Lotos-Eaters," "Œnone," The "Palace of Art," "A Dream of Fair Women," the tender "May-Queen," and the "Lady of Shallott." Perhaps the first four of these are among the very finest works of Tennyson. In the mouth of the love-lorn nymph, Œnone, he places the complaint concerning Paris into which there enters so much delightful picture of the scenery around Mount Ida, and of those fair immortals who come to be judged by the beardless apple-arbiter. How deliciously flows the verse!—though probably it flows still more entrancingly in "The Lotos-Eaters," wandering there like clouds of fragrant incense, or some slow heavy honey, or a rare amber unguent poured out. How wonderfully harmonious with the dream-mood of the dreamers are phrase, image, and measure! But we need not quote the lovely choric song wherein occur the lines—

> "Music that gentlier on the spirit lies
> Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes—"

so entirely restful and happy in their simplicity. If Art would always blossom so, she might be forgiven if she blossomed only for her own sake; yet this controversy regarding *Art for Art* need hardly have arisen, since Art may certainly bloom for her own sake, if only she consent to assimilate in her blooming, and so exhale for her votaries, in due proportion, all elements essential

to Nature, and Humanity; for in the highest artist all faculties are transfigured into one supreme organ; while among forms her form is the most consummate, among fruits her fruit offers the most satisfying refreshment. What a delicately true picture have we here—

> "And like a downward smoke, the slender stream
> Along the cliff to fall, and pause, and fall did seem"

where we feel also the poet's remarkable faculty of making word and rhythm an echo and auxiliary of the sense. Not only have we the three cæsuras respectively after "fall," and "pause" and "fall," but the length, and soft amplitude of the vowel sounds, with liquid consonants, aid in the realization of the picture reminding of Milton's beautiful "From morn to noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve, a summer's day." The same faculty is notable in the rippling tilt of the charming little "Brook" song, and indeed everywhere......

It has been noted also how cunningly Tennyson can gild and furbish up the most commonplace detail—as when he calls Arthur's moustache "the knightly growth that fringed his lips," or condescends to glorify a pigeon-pie, or paints the clown's astonishment by this detail, "the brawny spearman let his cheek bulge with the unswallowed piece, and turning stared"; or thus characterises a pun, "and took the word, and play'd upon it, and made it of two colours." This kind of ingenuity, indeed, belongs rather to talent than to genius; it is exercised in cold blood; but talent may be a valuable auxiliary of genius, perfecting skill in the technical departments of art. Yet such a gift is not without danger to the possessor. It may tempt him to make his work too much like a delicate mosaic of costly stone, too hard and unbl-nded, from excessive elaboration of detail. One may even prefer to art thus highly wrought a more glowing and careless strain, that lifts us off our feet, and carries us away as on a more rapid, if more turbid torrent of inspiration, such as we find in Byron, Shelley, or Victor Hugo. Here you are compelled to pause at every step, and admire the design of the costly tesselated pavement under your feet. Perhaps there is a jewelled glitter, a Pre-Raphaelite or Japanese minuteness of finish here and there in Tennyson, that takes away from the feeling of ærial perspective and remote distance, leaving little to the imagination; not suggesting and whetting the appetite, but rather satiating it: his loving observation of minute particulars is so faithful, his knowledge of what others, even men of science, have oberved so accurate, his fancy so nimble in the detection of similitudes. But every master has his own manner, and his reverent disciples would be sorry if he could be without it. We love the little idiosyncrasies of our friends........

Who, moreover, has moulded for us phrases of more transcendent dignity, of more felicitous grace and import, phrases, epithets, and lines that have already become memorable house-

hold words? More magnificent expression I cannot conceive than that of such poems as "Lucretius," "Tithonus," "Ulysses." These all for versification, language, luminous picture, harmony of structure, have never been surpassed. What pregnant brevity, weight, and majesty of the expression in the lines where Lucretius characterises the death of his namesake, Lucretia, ending "and from it sprang the commonwealth, which breaks, as I am breaking now!" Here is masterly power in poetical embodying a materialistic philosophy, congenial to modern science, yet in absolute dramatic keeping with the actual thought of the Roman poet, and, at the same time, strong grasp of the terrible conflict of passion with reason, two natures in one, significant for all epochs! In "Tithonus" and "Ulysses" we find embodiments in high-born verse and illustrious word of ideal moods, adventurous peril-affronting Enterprise contemptuously tolerant of tame household virtues in "Ulysses," and the bane of a burdensome immortality, become incapable even of love, in "Tithonus." Any personification more exquisite than that of Aurora in the latter were inconceivable......... ..

"Rizpah" is one of the strongest, most intensely felt, and graphically realised dramatic poems in the language; its pathos is almost overwhelming. There is nothing more tragic in "Œdipus," "Antigone," or "Lear.' And what a strong Saxon homespun language has the veteran poet found for these terrible lamentations of half-demented agony, "My Baby! the bones that had sucked me, the bones that had laughed and had cried, Theirs! O no! They are mine, not theirs—they had moved in my side." Then the heart-gripping phrase breaking forth ever and anon in some imaginative metaphorical utterance of wild emotion, to which the sons and daughters of the people are often moved, eloquent beyond all eloquence, white-hot from the heart!........... ....."The Revenge" is equally masculine, simple and sinewy in appropriate strength of expression, a most spirited rendering of a heroic naval action—worthy of a place, as is also the grand ode on the death of Wellington, beside the war odes of Campbell, the "Agincourt" of Drayton, and the "Rule Britannia" of Thomson. The irregular metre of the "Ballad of the Fleet" is most remarkable as a vehicle of the sense, resonant with din of battle, full-voiced with rising and bursting storm toward the close, like the equally spirited concluding scenes of "Harold," that depict the battle of Senlac.

[*From Hutton's Essays.*]

Lord Tennyson was an artist even before he was a poet; in other words the eye for beauty, grace, and harmony of effect was even more emphatically one of his original gifts than the voice for poetical utterance itself. This, probably, it is which makes his very earliest pieces appear so full of effort, and sometimes even so

full of affectation. They were elaborate attempts to embody what he saw, before the natural voice of the poet had to come to him. I think it possible to trace not only a pre-poetic period in his art,—the period of the Orianas, Owls, Mermans, &c.—but to date the period at which the soul was 'infused' into his poetry, and the brilliant external pictures become the dwelling-places of germinating poetic thoughts creating their own music. The Roman Catholics have, I believe, a doctrine that at a certain stage in the growth of the embryo body the soul is "infused" into it, and from that stage it shapes and moulds all the structures of the body with a view to their subserviency to a moral and spiritual growth. Apply that analogy to Tennyson's poems, and the period before 1832 is the period before his vivid pictures had a soul in them, and consequently before they had a music of their own. He himself has told us very finely in one of his newer poems, when describing the building of Arthur's great capital,—which, like Ilium, was rumoured to have been built to a divine music,—how the highest works of the human spirit are created:—

"For an ye heard a music, like enow
They are building still, seeing the city is built
To music, therefore never built at all,
And therefore built for ever."

There was no such music in Tennyson's earliest verses, but he himself has all but told us when the period in which his productiveness was due more to the "lust of the eye" than to any true poetic gift, ceased. Curiously enough, the first poem where there is any trace of those musings on the legends of the Round Table to which he has directed so much of his maturest genius, is also a confession that the poet was sick of the magic mirror of fancy and its picture-shadows, and was turning away from them to the poetry of human life..........

But even after the embryo period is past, even when Lord Tennyson's poems are uniformally moulded by an 'infused' soul, one not unfrequently notices the excess of the faculty of vision over the governing conception which moulds the vision, so that I think he is almost always most successful when his poem begins in a thought or a feeling, rather than from a picture or a narrative, for then the thought or feeling dominates and controls an otherwise too lavish fancy.......*Ulysses* and *Tithonus* are far superior to *Œnone*, exquisite as the pictorial workmanship of *Œnone* is; *The Palace of Art* is finer than *The Dream of Fair Women*; *The Death of Lucretius*, painful as the subject is, than *Enoch Arden* or *Aylmer's Field*; and, for the same reason, *In Memoriam* is perhaps an even more perfect whole than the poem of greatest scope, and in some respects the noblest of his imaginative efforts, the great Arthurian epic which he completed so much later. Whenever Lord Tennyson's pictorial fancy has had it in any degree in its power to run away with the guiding

and controlling mind, the richness and the workmanship have, to some extent, over-grown the spiritual principle of his poems.

I suppose it is in some respects this lavish strength of what may be called the bodily element in poetry, as distinguished from the spiritual life and germ of it, which has given Lord Tennyson at once his delight in great variety and richness of materials, and his profound reverence for the principle of spiritual order which can alone impress unity and purpose on the tropical luxuriance of natural gifts. It is obvious, for instance, that even in relation to natural scenery, what his poetical faculty delights in most are rich, luxuriant landscapes, in which either nature or man has accumulated a lavish variety of effects. There is nothing of Wordsworth's passion for the bare wild scenery of the rugged North in his poems.......

It is in the scenery of the mill, the garden, the chase, the down, the rich pastures, the harvest field, the palace pleasure-grounds, the Lord of Burleigh's fair domains, the luxuriant sylvan beauty, bearing testimony to the careful hand of man, 'the summer crisp with shining woods,' that Lord Tennyson most delights. If he strays to rarer scenes it is almost always in search of richer and more luxuriant loveliness, like the tropical splendours of *Enoch Arden*, and the enervating skies which cheated the Lotos-eaters of their longing for home. There is always complexity in the beauty which fascinates Lord Tennyson most.

And with the love of complexity comes, as a matter of course in a born artist, the love of the ordinary faculty which can give unity and harmony to complexity of detail. Measure and order are for Lord Tennyson the essence of beauty. His strong fascination for the Arthurian legends results no doubt, from the mixture, in the moral materials of the age of chivalry, exuberant stateliness and rich polish, with the imperious need for spiritual order to control the dangerous elements of the period. His Arthurian epic is a great attempt to depict the infusion of a soul into a chaos of stately passion. Even in relation to modern politics you always see the same bias, a love of rich constitutional traditions welded together and ruled by wise forethought and temperate judgment. He cannot endure either spasmodic violence on the one hand, or bold simplicity on the other. What he loves is a land

> "Where Freedom broadens slowly down
> From precedent to precedent."

In "In Memoriam" he goes out of his way to condemn French political anarchy—

> "The school-boy heat,
> The blind hysterics of the Celt"—

and to throw scorn on the "red fool-fury of the Seine." Still more

curious is the paranthetic question, interpolated almost angrily, in the opening of an exquisite love poem, "Love and Duty"—

> "O shall the braggart shout
> For some blind glimpse of freedom, work itself
> *Through madness, hated by the wise, to law,*
> *System, and empire?"*—

as if he grudged revolutionary energy even its occasional success. Never was any cry more absurd than the cry made against "Maud" for the sympathy it was supposed to show with hysterical passion. What it *was* meant to be, and what it was, though inadequately—the failure being due, not to sympathy with hysterics, but to the zeal with which Tennyson strove to caricature hysterics—was an exposure of hysterics. The love of measure and order is as visible in Tennyson's pictures of character as in every other aspect of his poetry. His "St. Simeon Stylites" is his hostile picture of the fanatic, just as his "Ulysses" is his friendly picture of the insatiable craving for new experience, enterprise, and adventure, when under the control of a luminous reason and a self-controlled will.

And this love of measure and order in complexity shows itself even more remarkably in Lord Tennyson's leaning to the domestic, modern type of women. All his favourite women are women of a certain fixed class in social life, usually not the lowest; sometimes homely, like Alice, the miller's daughter, and Rose, the gardener's daughter, or Dora, or the wife of the Lord of Burleigh; sometimes women of the drawing-room or the palace, like Maud, Lady Flora in *The Day-Dream*, or the Princess in the poem about women, or Lynette, and Enid, and Elaine, and Guinevere in the *Idylls of the King*; but always women of the quiet and domestic type (except indeed the heroine of *The Sisters*), women whom you might meet every day in a modern home, women of the garden-flower kind, rather than of the wild-flower kind.........The simplest, and most lyrical heroines, heroines like Gretchen in *Faust*, or Mignon in *Wilhelm Meister*, are hardly in Lord Tennyson's way. He loves something of the airs and manners which a fixed social status gives.
....

The simplest, though hardly the most characteristic, form of his art is no doubt the Idyll, in which Lord Tennyson has delighted from the first—so much so, that he has applied the term, somewhat misleadingly, I think, to one of his last, and, in many respects his greatest, works. The "idyll" proper is, I suppose, a *picture* coloured by a single emotion, and intended to give a perfect illustration of that emotion. The power which makes Lord Tennyson's idylls so unique in their beauty is, I think, his wonderful skill in creating a perfectly real and living scene—such as always might, perhaps somewhere does, exist in external nature—for the theatre of the

feeling he is about to embody, and yet a scene every feature of which helps to make the emotion delineated more real and vivid .....

Lord Tennyson's power of compelling the external world to lend him a language for the noblest feelings is, however, but the instrument of a still higher faculty, the power of apprehending those feelings themselves with the vigour of a great dramatist; and though his range is not wide, they include some of the most delicate and intellectual, and some of the coarsest and most earthly. He is not a great dramatist, for his delineations move almost wholly in one plane, in the mood he has studied and writes to interpret. He can find the exactly appropriate reverie for the smarting and no very deeply wounded heart of a grandiose and somewhat bumptious lover dismissed like the rejected of Locksley Hall, for his deficiencies in wealth and station, and who does not suffer so much but that he can concern himself even then with the prospects of the race and "the process of the suns?"......

He has hardly succeeded, except in *Queen Mary*, and his fine picture of Henry II. in *Becket*, in drawing a character in all its variety of attitudes; and though those poems are quite fine enough to show his dramatic power, they are not sufficiently characteristic of his genius to show any wealth of dramatic fancy. Hence his genius can hardly be called dramatic, though in relation to single moods he finds an infinitely more characteristic language for their expression than Mr. Browning, who would make Tithonus, Ulysses, St. Simeon Stylites, and the Northern Farmers all talk Browningese. But admitting the partial limitation of Lord Tennyson's genius to the interpretation of *moods*, admitting even the limited number of moods he can interpret adequately for he seems to fail through caricature when he attempts, as in *Maud*, or *The Vision of Sin*, to express misanthropical moods—yet no other poet has rivalled in force and subtlety the work he has thus achieved......

Lord Tennyson's powers of observation, though by no means rapid, are exceedingly close and tenacious, and he has the strong apprehensive grasp of the naturalist in conjunction with the harmonizing faculty of the poet. He seems to have studied his "Grandmother," and his two "Northern Farmers" much as he has studied the habits of trees and animals. He has a striking microscopic faculty on which his poetic imagination works. No poet has so many and such accurate references to the vegetable world, and yet at the same time references so thoroughly poetic...... ...He is never tired of reflecting in his poetry the physiology of flowers, of trees, and of buds. It is precisely the same microscopic faculty as this applied to characteristic human habits which has produced the three wonderful studies in English vernacular life...........

Yet it would be completely false to give the impression that Lord Tennyson's studies are studies in 'still' life. There is always

the movement of real life in his poems, even in passages where the movement could never show, if the movement itself, like the subject of it, were not magnified by the medium through which he makes us view it......'Will Waterproof's Lyrical Monologue,' for instance, never halts a moment at any one point, though the whole might have actually passed through the mind in a few seconds. The "Grandmother's" and "Northern Farmer's" reveries flow on at much the same rate they might flow at in actual life; and it is only the extreme elaboration of the picture, reminding one of some of Denner's portraits of rustic life, in which every wrinkle and every shade of colour is accurately rendered, that suggests to the reader the impression of slow movement. So, too, the scorn of Ulysses for the petty drudgery of his Ithacan household and government, his longing to be once more shooting the rapids of earthly adventure, his contemptuous satisfaction in the capacity of Telemachus to fill his place, and the great bound which his heart makes towards the sea that "moans round with many voices," succeed each other with a movement certainly not more languid than that of Homer himself. In painting, Lord Tennyson is so terse and compressed that, though he never suggests the idea of swiftness—there is too much pains expended upon the individual stroke for that—it would be simply absurd to call his manner dilatory. Indeed, his pictures often succeed each other too rapidly without the graduation which prepares the mind for the change, so as to give a sense of effort to the reader by implying an extreme condensation in the writer. It is only in the song, or pieces closely approaching a song in structure like "The Brook," that his style ripples along with perfect ease and grace. If we compare the lovely modulation of "The Brook," or the liquid notes of "Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying," or the delicate rapture of "Come into the garden, Maud," with the stately compression of "The Palace of Art" or of most of the "Idylls of the King," we shall at once see that it is not want of motion, but rather excessive expression, which gives to so many of Tennyson's poems the air of moving through a resisting medium. There is nothing like "still" life to be found in his poems. When he puts a half-understood emotion or a new natural fact under his poetic object-glass, it may occupy a larger space than it ever did in the poems of other poets, but that it is only because the scale of life is larger. No poet is less justly liable to the charge of making much of a little or of pottering over his poetic discoveries.........

[*From Dowden's "Studies in Literature."*]

Mr. Tennyson has a strong sense of the dignity and efficiency of *law*—of law understood in its widest meaning. Energy nobly controlled, an ordered activity, delight his imagination. Violence, extravagance, immoderate force, the swerving from appointed ends

revolt, these are with Mr. Tennyson the supreme manifestations of evil. . . . .

Mr. Tennyson finds law present throughout all nature; but there is no part of nature in which he dwells with so much satisfaction as in human society. No one, so largely as Mr. Tennyson, has represented in art the new thoughts and feelings which form the impassioned side of the modern conception of progress. His imagination is ever haunted by "the vision of the world, and the wonder that would be." But the hopes and aspirations of Mr. Tennyson are not of the radical or movement character. He is, in all his poems, conservative as well as liberal. Now Mr. Tennyson's conception of progress, which he has drawn from his moral and intellecual environment, and which accords with his own moral temper, is widely different [from Shelley's]. No idea perhaps occupies a place in his poems so central as that of the progress of the race. This it is which lifts out of his idle dejection and selfish dreaming the speaker in "Locksley Hall." . . .

> "Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range,
> Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change."

This it is which suggests an apology for the fantasies of "The Day Dream." This it is which arms the tempted man with a weapon of defence, and the temper with a deadlier weapon of attack in "The Two Voices"......This it is which forms the closing prophecy of "The Princess," the full confession of the poet's faith......But in all these poems through which the idea of progress is so variously expressed, and brought into relation with moods of mind so diverse, the progress of mankind is uniformly represented as the evolution and the self-realization of a law; it is represented as taking place gradually and slowly, and its consummation is placed in a remote future. We "hear the roll of the ages," the "increasing purpose" runs through centuries, it is "with the process of the suns" that the thoughts of men are widened. . . . It is in long years that the sexes shall attain to the fulness of their mighty growth until, at last man and woman

> "upon the skirts of time,
> Sit side by side, full summed in all their powers
> Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be..................
> Then comes the statelier Eden back to men;
> Then reign the world's great bridals, chaste and calm;
> Then springs the crowning race of human kind."

And the highest augury telling of this "crowning race" is drawn from those who, already having moved upward through the lower

phases of being, become precursors and pledges of the glorious children of the future:

"For all we thought and loved and did,
And hoped, and suffered, is but seed
Of what in them is flower and fruit;

Whereof the man, that with me trod
This planet, was a noble type
Appearing ere the times were ripe,
That friend of mine who lives in God.

That God, which ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves."

The great hall which Merlin built for Arthur is girded by four zones of symbolic sculpture; the lowest zone, beasts are slaying men; in the second men are slaying beasts;

"And on the third are warriors, perfect men
And on the fourth are men with growing wings."

To work out the beast is the effort of long ages; to attain to be "a perfect man" is for those who shall follow us afar off; to soar with wings is for the crowning race of the remotest future.

Apart from the growth of the individual, the golden age to which the poet looks forward, the coming of which he sees shine in the distance, is characterized, as he imagines it, by a great development of knowledge, especially of scientific knowledge; this first; and secondly, by the universal presence of political order and freedom, national and international, secured by a vast and glorious federation. It is quite of a piece with Mr. Tennyson's feeling for law, that his imagination should be much impressed by the successes of science, and that its promises should correspond with his hopes. The crowning race will be a company

"Of those that eye to eye shall look
On knowledge; under whose command
Is Earth and Earth's, and in their hand
Is nature like an open book."

Were we to sleep the hundred years, our joy would be to wake

"On science grown to more
On secrets of the brain, the stars."

It is the promises and achievements of science which restore sanity to the distraught lover of "Locksley Hall."

In "The Princess," the sport-half-science of galvanic batteries,

model steam-engines, clock-work steamers, and fire balloons suggest the thought of a future adult knowledge:

> "This fine old world of ours is but a child
> Yet in the go-cart. Patience! give it time
> To learn its limbs: there is a hand that guides."

But Mr. Tennyson's dream of the future is not more haunted by visionary discoveries, and revelations of science than by the phantoms of great political organizations. That will be a time

> "When the war drum throbs no longer, and the battle flags are furled
> In the Parliament of men; the Federation of the World."

a time in which

> "Phantoms of other forms of rule
> New Majesties of mighty states"

will appear, made real at length; a time in which the years will bring to being

> "The vast Republics that may grow,
> The Federations and the Powers;
> Titanic forces taking birth."

These days and works of the crowning race are, however, far beyond our grasp; and the knowledge of this, with the faith that the progress of mankind is the expression of a slowly self-revealing law, puts a check upon certain of our hopes and strivings. He who is possessed by this faith will look for our hopes and strivings. He who is possessed by this faith will look for no speedy regeneration of men in the social or political sphere, and can but imperfectly sympathise with those enthusiastic hearts whose expectations, nourished by their ardours and desires, are eager and would forestall futurity. Mr. Tennyson's justness of mind in a measure forsakes him, when he has to speak of political movements into which passion in its uncalculating form has entered as a man's motive power. Yet passion of this type is the right and appropriate power for the use of certain times and seasons. It is by ventures of faith in politics that mountains are removed. The Tory member's eldest son estimates the political movements of France in an insular spirit, which, it may be surmised, has in it something of Mr. Tennyson's own feeling:

> "Whiff! there comes a sudden heat;
> The gravest citizen seems to lose his head;
> The King is sacred, the soldier will not fight;
> The little boys begin to shoot and stab."

Yet to France more than to England have the enslaved nations turned their faces when they have striven to rend their bonds........

Mr. Tennyson's ideal for every country is England, and that is a blunder in politics:

> "A land of settled Government,
> A land of just and old renown,
> Where Freedom slowly broadens down
> From precedent to precedent."

That is admirable verse; but it is nobler to make than to follow precedents, and great emotions, passionate thought, audacities of virtue quickly create a history and tradition of precedents in the lives alike of individuals and of nations. Mr. Tennyson loves freedom, but she must assume an English costume before he can recognise her; the freedom which he loves is

> "That sober freedom out of which there springs
> Our loyal passion to our temperate Kings."

> "Freedom in her royal seat
> Of England, not the schoolboy heat,
> The blind hysterics of the Celt."

........England can celebrate a golden wedding with Freedom, and gather children about her knees; let there be a full and deep rejoicing. But why forbid the more unmeasured joy of the lover of Freedom who has dreamed of her, and has fought for her, and who now is glad because he has once seen her and may die for her?

[*From Morton Luce's "Handbook to Tennyson's Works."*]

Œnone.—Those who compare the earlier with the later versions of Tennyson's poems, will probably be struck by the frequency with which an added beauty may be traced to another writer..... Many instances might be given, such as "Large Hesper glitter'd on her tears," in the last stanza of "Mariana in the South"; it replaces "Large Hesper overshone the mourning gulf," and it resembles "No light could glimmer on their tears" in "Hyperion." Such resemblances are numerous in the new edition of "Œnone"; the best known line in the whole poem, "And at their feet the crocus brake like fire," which was added in the 1842 copy, can be traced in part to Homer; and with some certainty; for in its company came other flowers not in the earlier version; and the figure at the end of the line may have been suggested by Wordsworth's "Flowers that set the hills on fire." The reference to Homer is made much clearer by the fact that the lines in the context,

> "And o'er him flowed a golden cloud, and leaned
> Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew,"

are almost word for word with two lines in the context of the Homer—

"Upon this [couch] they reclined, and clothed themselves above with a beautiful golden cloud; and lucid dewdrops fell from it." (*Iliad*, XIV, 350-351)."*

This example must be regarded as a typical one; and we will now dismiss the comparison between the old and the new version by remarking that with the exception of "The Palace of Art," the Œnone "of 1833 fails more than any other poem of its final perfection in 1842."

The blank verse is very remarkable; though almost the first we have met with, it is excellent, and something new. Stateliness of movement, fulness of sound, are its chief characteristics. These effects are produced partly by a careful employment of open and closed vowels, partly by avoiding a weak tenth syllable, the lines, though not necessarily end-stopped, have weight enough at the close to give emphasis to the turn of the verse, and majesty to the whole rhythm.

The poem, which seems to have been suggested by Theocritus and other classical writers, and still more closely resembles Beattie's "Judgment of Paris," is said to have shaped itself in the poet's mind while he was in the Pyrenees; accordingly, the first draft is filled in partly with Pyrenean, partly with other scenery, some of it imaginary. In the revised version......there is less of the Pyrenees and more of imaginary landscape. The same is true of "The Palace of Art." Many bits of natural description from "Poems by two Brothers" are worked into the sketch of the valley. In this way the poet secures a more perfect correspondence between the solitary figure and the scene of her sorrow—the ruined folds, the fragments tumbled from the hills—than if he had gone with his pigments to Mount Ida and brought home on his canvas some real and revolting incongruity. As it is, earth hearkens to her cry, the stream is loud because of her wrongs, the very stars of heaven are trembling above her.

"Œnone," "Hesperides," "The Lotos-Eaters," and "Ulysses" are classical in outline, but mostly modern in sentiment. Just as in Shakespeare we meet with long passages that are really excrescent from the true dramatic growth, so in "Œnone" the speech of Pallas is the speech of the nineteenth century poet himself; it breathes of his sobriety, his love of order and law, his wisdom—a word that cannot be written without apology—his goodness. There is little enough of the Greek in it. The story of "Œnone" is summed up in one line of Ovid, "Sustinet Œnonen deseruisse Paris." But the one line stands between two Epics. For the mortals, or even the demi-Gods of Greek tragedy, were as flies whom the high gods killed for their sport, and behind the stage of saddened

* We have substituted the literal translation of the lines for the original Greek.

nature on which Œnone plays her short pathetic part, a banquet of the gods is spread, and Strife, the Abominable, throws among them the fatal apple.

Œnone had the gift of prophecy. This effective element Tennyson does not introduce as Œnone's; it would take away from the pity of her sorrow; but she will talk of the wild Cassandra, and hear her tell how the noise of battle is ringing in her ears. And we who also listen can dimly forecast the ten years' war in Troy, and all its mighty issues..............

The Lotos-Eaters.—Two poems in the volume of 1833, "The Hesperides" and "The Lotos-Eaters," stand side by side; but eventually "The Hesperides" was withdrawn, and gave up some of its beauty to "The Lotos-Eaters"; gave, for example, the word "fullfaced" from the following line:

"But when the full-faced sunset yellowly";

for the line in "The Lotos-Eaters," "Full-faced above the valley stood the moon," read thus in the first edition—"Above the valley burned the golden moon." Besides these changes, the latter part of the more fortunate poem was re-written; and "The Hesperides" was rejected possibly on account of a few slight weaknesses, but more probably because its resemblances marred the single beauty of "The Lotos-Eaters."

That a poet should make alterations in his published work, even many times, is a matter partly for admiration and advantage, partly for disapprobation and regret. In this respect of new editions, literary art stands almost alone. When we buy a picture that has been hung in the Royal Academy, we take it for granted that the painter has done with it. But masterpieces of literary art, sold as such, should not be subject to continued remodelling; for the purchaser may be inclined to murmur, "Your work was either ready for sale, or not; and if not, you might have kept it until it was; you were either deficient in some critical faculty, or you forced unfinished work upon the public and compelled them to buy over again." To this imaginary charge Tennyson has made himself much more liable than any other poet, and under this head it will be interesting to compare him with such other modern poets as Browning, Swinburne, Longfellow, Wm. Morris, M. Arnold, D. G. Rossetti."

But, to adopt the homely phrases of this argument, and twist it back upon itself a little, the lover of poetry who had the good fortune to buy "The Lotos-Eaters" of 1833 received full value for his money. "Nihil tetigit quod non ornavit"* must be quoted once more as we write of Tennyson; but after this, few of us will greatly care to hear the familiar Latin again.

* "He touched nothing that he did not adorn."

Three sonnets were mentioned a short time back, as possessing an excellence unknown to the sonnet before: this time it is the Spenserian stanza with whose murmuring

> "She had lulled him fast asleep
> That of no worldly thing he care did take,"

and to whose music:

> "'Gan all the quire of birds
> Their diverse notes t'attune";

But the five stanzas at the beginning of "The Lotos-Eaters" breathe a murmuring or a music more melodious even than Spenser's on The Idle Lake or in the Bowre of Blisse.

Very fine also is the musical effect of the closing section as it is found in the improved version. Tennyson had at last an ear for the music of verse; and the description of "The Vision of Sin" which may be compared with the section before mentioned, seems to show that the Laureate was more of a tone poet than we are sometimes disposed to admit.

The main subject of "The Lotos-Eaters" occurs in the "Odyssey"; a good deal has been suggested by Bion and Moschus and in English literature, Spenser's "Faerie Queen" and Thomson's "Castle of Indolence" have furnished additional motive and material. Indeed so many poets are laid under contribution that the poem is almost "a posy of other men's flowers," and "little more than the string that binds them" is Tennyson's; but the bond is a cestus of no common magic.

It is impossible to speak of "The Lotos-Eaters," however briefly, without repeating what must be delightfully obvious to all, the skill with which the poet has placed his languid dreamers where earth, and heaven, and the sea, and the very gods themselves are one languid dream. But in the self-indulgent repose of the Lotos Land the comrades of Ulysses were not permitted to linger: this is the voice of Tennyson; and we shall soon hear it again in Ulysses.....

According to the poet and the friends of the poet, "Ulysses," is a portrait of Tennyson; but there were many Tennysons, or at least two; and a better likeness of the author of "Far-far-away," will be found in "Tears, Idle Tears." Those two poems come straight from the heart; the others, such as "Ulysses," may be "drawn from the spirit through the brain." If Ulysses is a "gray spirit yearning in desire. To follow Knowledge," we also have it on the poet's own authority that "Tears, Idle Tears," was written to express yearnings for the past. "Ulysses" fitly follows "The Golden Year," and affords a striking contrast to "The Lotos-Eaters." The modernized Greek "works, and feels he works."......

Ulysses.—This is a noble poem in conception and in execution, although its Ulysses is no more that ancient King of Ithaca

than the Arthur of the Idylls is King of Britain. Of the earlier Ulysses a dim legend may be read in Homer, and hints gained from Virgil and Horace; and these poets are represented in Tennyson's verse. But the more modern figure has taken shape in Dante's "Inferno" (xxvi, 94-126), and to Dante Tennyson stands most indebted. The blank verse of the poem is admirably adapted to the character "strong in will, To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."..............

[*From Macmillan's Magazine for November* 1897.]

Lord Tennyson's memoir of his father is a book which it would be pleasant to praise, but a review of it would be foreign to the purpose of this essay. Yet the subject cannot be dismissed without a word as to the spirit in which so honourable a task has been accomplished. The book can give pain to no one, and from the first page to the last there is not a name mentioned in it but in charity at least, if not in kindness. Tennyson's temper would seem to have had this of greatness, that it drew out the best nature of those who met him. Old Rogers figures here in almost a lovable aspect; and in all that has been written of Carlyle, I have read nothing that sketched him with such a tenderness of humour. One realises how great must have been Lady Tennyson's share in the work; the record of Carlyle's rough gentleness to her is essentially a woman's record. Thus the book adds much that is interesting and beautiful to our knowledge, not only of Tennyson in his domestic life but of his intimates. On Tennyson the artist, however, and upon his poems, it throws very little new light; simply because revelations are impossible when there is nothing to reveal.

No poetry was ever more interpenetrated with its author's personality than that of Tennyson, yet it was strangely little affected by the incidents of his life. The man in him lived singularly with himself, singularly self-contained, singularly unchanging. His poems were the utterance of a deep central nature slowly shaping itself into words, not, as for instance Byron's were, the cry or the retort of that inner nature in response to some attack from the outside. IN MEMORIAM, it is true, came to birth under the stimulus of a great sorrow; yet who doubts that, if Arthur Hallam had lived to the full measure of a lifetime, the substance of IN MEMORIAM would still have been written in some other form? Indeed the central thought of the poem was repeated, and more than once, in the half articulate cry of a lyric, as for example, in VASTNESS:

> Spring and Summer and Autumn and Winter and all these old
> revolutions of earth;
> All new-old revolutions of Empire—change of the tide—what is all
> of it worth?

What the philosophies, all the sciences, poesy, varying voices of prayer?
All that is noblest, all that is basest, all that is filthy with all that is fair?
What is it all, if we all of use end but in being our own corpse-coffins at last,
Swallow'd in Vastness, lost in Silence, drown'd in the deeps of a meaningless Past?
What but a murmur of gnats in the gloom, or a moment's anger of bees in their hive?—
Peace, let it be! for I loved him and love him for ever; the dead are not dead but alive.

The faith which gave to life its significance for Tennyson was the faith in a continued life after death, and sooner or later that was bound to find expression in a poet's confession of faith. Hallam's death pressed the questioning home upon him, but it added no new element; Tennyson was unchanged by the shock. There is no spasm in the development of his nature, no sudden leap, but a steady harmonious maturing from flower into fruit. Of such a process biography can tell us nothing except that it went on; and the result of a temper with such power of self-sufficing is a life so level that it has no crises to record.

Yet in his life there was one critical decision which had to be taken, more significant than anything else. At their father's death the Tennysons were left without much money; Alfred Tennyson had just means enough to live at home and devote himself to poetry without being a burden on his mother. Naturally enough he chose to do so, and follow the bent of his whole life. But there came the choice which presents itself to almost every artist, unless he be exceptionally lucky or unlucky. Tennyson fell in love, wanted to marry, and where was the money? He might undoubtedly have earned a competence by throwing himself into some form of journalism and trusted to the future for an opportunity to do his true work. But his mind was quite clear that to produce literature primarily for money and not for itself was the damnation of a poet, and his first loyalty was to his art. He met Miss Emily Sellwood in 1830, when he was twenty-one and she seventeen, and a few years later became informally engaged to her. Yet he would not compromise his principles even so far as to accept the offers of magazines who wanted verses from him. In 1840 Miss Sellwood's parents broke off an engagement which seemed to promise no termination, and for ten years all correspondence was forbidden between the pair. In 1850 they met again; Tennyson's fame was now established, he saw his way to offering marriage, and married accordingly they were, but not till he was forty-one and she thirty-seven. The unique good fortune which made of his later life a triumphal progress was with him in this also; but, as none

who reads his life, or has read his writings, will doubt that the happiness of his marriage was the chiefest of all life's gifts to him, so must that long-deferred attainment have meant the supreme self-denial in his life-long service of art. It was one self-denial among many, yet, were it the only one, it alone would suffice to prove that Tennyson was no spoiled child of fortune, but had to eat the bread of bitterness and drink the waters of affliction for long years in the desert before he attained to that amazing prosperity which still dazzles our judgment.

For if you come to think of it no man of our race, within living memory, except the Duke of Wellington, has died in such greatness. In poetry he had reached a more unchallenged supremacy that any poet since Pope. Like Pope he lived to see himself the standard of poetic style, the elaborator of a new perfection in language; like Pope he attained to riches which even a successful merchant would not disdain; but how incomparably greater than Pope's was his happiness! In his physical nature he was gifted with a union of stature and beauty such as alone would have distinguished him, if one could separate such beauty from the higher distinction of intellect. In his disposition, apart from superficial eccentricities, he was so gracious that friendships surrounded him and ripened with the years; and though criticism could hurt him, jealousy had no hold upon his nature. The letters that passed between him and Browning are a thing to read and be thankful for, as one remembers Pope's miserable catalogue of suspicions, animosities, and stabbings. His domestic life was crowned with a marriage such as many poets have written of but few realised; graced with children, and set in two such homes as, the Memoir may well say, certainly no other poet has ever called his own. The greatest men of his own day, not alone the men of letters, but soldiers, statesmen, men of science, and philosophers, looked up to him openly as a mind stronger than theirs, a name that would outlive theirs; nations sent him their tribute of praise and begged him to commemorate their heroes; a great Queen honoured and loved him. For a career so imperial in the majesty that art may bestow upon the fortunate, one must go back to Titian. And yet this man's empire was far wider than Titian's. The beauty that he fashioned could travel to the ends of the world, and was not confined to any place; it was not the luxury of the great but the possession of all. He stirred a public wider than ever Byron swayed, for wherever the English language was spoken he was known not merely as the poet, but as the teacher and comforter. Not alone from England, but from the wilds of Australia, from palaces and from poor men's homes, came messages of gratitude unlooked for, uncalled for, whose sincerity was not to be mistaken. And as one reads through these volumes and comes upon letters from Thackeray, from Jowett, from Mr. Gladstone, from Mr. Ruskin, in answer to each new volume, all ranking the

poet with the very greatest, it is impossible not to feel an unwillingness to attempt any further criticism. To the praise of such men it is superfluous to add a common tribute; and if these men are mistaken who is likely to be in the right? Moreover any critic of the generation which has been brought up on Tennyson must be aware that his entire attitude towards poetry is affected by that master; that he judges work from a technical standpoint at which Tennyson has placed him; in short, that what he knows of poetry he has largely learned from Tennyson. Yet some sort of effort has to be made to assign to this great man his place in the hierarchy of poets.

These volumes establish one thing conclusively; that Tennyson was to the vast majority of his own generation, and probably also in his own eyes, the poet of the IDYLLS OF THE KING. If you had asked Mr. Gladstone, or Jowett, or Thackeray, to justify their faith in their contemporary, it is to the IDYLLS that they would probably have pointed. Thackeray's letter after reading them might have turned the head of any poet. "You have made me as happy as I was as a child with THE ARABIAN NIGHTS, every step I have walked in Elfland has been a sort of Paradise to me. . . . Do you understand that what I mean is all true, and that I should break out, were you sitting opposite with a pipe in your mouth?............Gold and purple and diamonds, I say, gentlemen, and glory and love and honour, and if you haven't given me all these, why should I be in such an ardour of gratitude?" Jowett writes: "The 'Lily Maid' seems to me the fairest, purest, sweetest love-poem in the English language. . . . It moves me like the love of Juliet in Shakespeare (though that is not altogether parallel), and I do not doubt, whatever opinions are expressed about it, that it will in a few years be above criticism. There are hundreds and hundreds of all ages (and men as well as women) who, although they have not died for love (have no intention of doing so), will find them a sort of ideal consolation of their own troubles and remembrances. Of the other poems I admire 'Vivien' the most (the naughty one), which seems to me a work of wonderful power and skill. . . . The allegory in the distance *greatly strengthens, also elevates, the meaning of the poems*. I shall not bore you with criticisms. It struck me what a great number of lines—

> He makes no friends who never made a foe—
> Then trust me not at all, or all in all—

will pass current on the lips of men, which I always regard as a great test of excellence, for it is saying the thing that everybody feels." And in 1893 he added: "Tennyson has made the Arthur legend a great revelation of human experience and of the thoughts of many hearts." Mr. Gladstone in his criticism declares that, "We know not where to look in history or letters for a nobler or more over-

powering conception of man as he might be than in the Arthur of this volume. Wherever he appears, it is as the great pillar of the moral order and the resplendent top of human excellence."

These quotations may suffice to establish my point: that the IDYLLS OF THE KING were the work of Tennyson which readers of all classes most readily took to their hearts. Yet at the present moment who can deny that the general trend of opinion has changed? The IDYLLS have certainly passed into the national inheritance; no reader of poetry is ignorant of them; yet they are not the things which we turn to when we take Tennyson from the shelf. Jowett's forecast of a great accession from them to the store of detached poetic expression which "passes current on the lips of men" has been amply fulfilled; yet except the MORTE D'ARTHUR, a fragment composed far earlier than the rest, there is no single poem of them all which retains its original hold on the imagination. Why is this? First, because they are allegories. No man can do two things together so well as one thing. If he describes a fight simply because he is possessed with the image of that fight, as Homer was, with the faces of the men fighting and the passion in their hearts, he will describe it better than a man who has also to be thinking of some other ideal contest. Take the three tiltings in GARETH AND LYNETTE; there are the encounters carefully distinguished in their details, but can you feel the thrill of battle in any one? Or take the love-scenes in the IDYLLS. How is a man to give you the passion, the tragedy, or the pathos of lawful and unlawful love if all the time his eye is on his allegory? In the beautiful poem of ELAINE, which so moved Jowett, the allegory is for a time happily in the background; it is only towards the end that we return to the bloodless moralisings. The poem is good as a poem just in proportion as it ceases to be interpretable into ethics, in proportion as the poet is concerned with his immediate subject and not with his ulterior purpose, in proportion as the characters assume flesh and blood and cease to be abstractions. Yet upon the whole is there any single figure, man or woman, in the IDYLLS who really lives as, not to name Achilles or Ulysses, Nausicaa lives, or Hector, or Helen; as Dedo lives; or, to come lower, as even William of Delorine lives and breathes? Not one, I think, not even Lancelot, humanised by a mixed nature and touched certainly with the poet's own lineaments. Gawain, Vivien, and the rest, get no fair play; they are types bound to do what they are bid; indeed, could any one of Tennyson's characters conceivably have run away with its creator, as, for instance, Shylock probably did, so as to alter the pre-arranged conception? The essential thing in the poet's mind when he wrote the IDYLLS was not the story but the moral of the story. The IDYLLS OF THE KING were his message to his time, consciously didactic. They were, in the last resort, sermons; sermons which affected the whole race as no utterance from any pulpit could

ever do, which raised unmistakably the national ideals; but which, being sermons, were half consciously shaped for a particular age and its particular requirements, and so have fallen into the decay that attends all moral exhortations. The poignant truth of one generation becomes the platitude of the next; each age requires its own prophets to stir it. Think of Pope's ESSAY ON MAN; that is a poem which in its way profoundly interested England and even France, which survives in admirable phrases, the condensation of its best thoughts, but which as a whole is superannuated. So, I fear, it will be with the legend which Tennyson, as Jowett says, made "a great revelation of human experience and of the thoughts of many hearts.

It is true the IDYLLS are narrative poems, and when their philosophy has ceased to interest,—it can never cease to influence for it has wrought itself into the very essence of Anglo-Saxon thought—men may still read them for the beauty of the tale. No sane man would deny that Tennyson wrote at times great narrative poetry; the ballad of THE REVENGE is there to prove it. But his inspiration was above all things lyrical, and no poet has been more responsible for the extraordinary extension given to the domain of lyrical poetry in this century. Poems like TITHONUS, ULYSSES, THE REVENGE, and MORTE D'ARTHUR are essentially lyrics; they are not a song perhaps, but they are a chant. But THE IDYLLS OF THE KING are in great measure pure narrative, in great measure narratives of battle, a style which suited Tennyson's genius no better than it did Virgil's, the poet who is most of kin to him in temper and achievement. Tennyson, it is true, wrote one of the best war-songs ever written, THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE; but he wrote it when he, like the whole nation, was at fever heat. Otherwise the fighting instinct finds no genuine voice in his poems. Even in THE REVENGE one does not enter into the fight; rather one feels the whole scene as if from a height, the contrast of numbers, the turmoil below, and the peaceful heavens above it.

> And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over the summer sea,
> But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the fifty-three.

It is Virgil's touch in the description of sacked and burning Troy; men are slaying, women shrieking, flames crackling,—

> Ferit *aurea* sidera clamor.

There you see the man's true genius. Virgil, like Tennyson, tells of wars in his own golden utterance conscientiously; but you can see the relief to either when the hard narrative slips into a simile, or into the description of some softer beauty that their own eyes have gazed on. As Tennyson was encumbered with his allegory, so was Virgil hampered with his taste of celebrating imperial Rome; and the best things in the narrative work of each are those

netre he m...
onclusion in the secon...
hich certainly no man in any language has co...

It is interesting to trace in two old letters a forecast of what ow almost every reader feels. "I am not sure," wrote Mr. Ruskin 1860, "but I feel the art and finish in these poems a little more han I like to feel it. Yet I am not a fair judge quite, for I am so uch of a realist as not by any possibility to interest myself much an unreal subject to feel it as I should, and the very sweetness d stateliness of the words strike me all the more as *pure* orkmanship. As a description of various nobleness and tenderness e book is without price; but I shall always wish it had been bleness independent of a romantic condition of externals in neral. . . . I cannot but think that the intense masterful and erring transcript of an actuality and the relation of a story of y real human life as a poet would watch and analyse it, would ake all men feel more or less what poetry was, as they felt what fe and Fate were in their instant workings. This seems to me true task of the modern poet. And I think I have seen faces heard voices by road and street side, which claimed or conferd as much as even the loveliest or saddest of Camelot." Ten ars later, in 1870, Edward Fitzgerald acknowledged the volume ntaining The Holy Grail: "Dear old Alfred, I write about what I might say to you were we together over a pipe, stead of so far asunder. The whole myth of Arthur's Round e Dynasty in Britain presents itself before me with a sort of dy, Stonehenge grandeur. I am not sure if the old knight's entures do not tell upon me better touched in some lyrical way ke your own Lady of Shalot) than when elaborated into epic form. never could care for Spenser, Tasso, or even Ariosto, whose epic s a ballad ring about it. Anyhow, Alfred, while I feel how pure, ble and holy your work is, and while phrases, lines, and sentences it will abide with me, and I am sure with men after me, I read on the Lincolnshire Farmer drew tears to my eyes. I was got back the substantial roughspun Nature I knew; and the old brute, inted by you with the solemn humour of humanity, like Shakespeare's allow, became a more pathetic phenomenon than the knights who isit the world in your other verse."

Surely there is the truth of the matter. Tennyson was a great ical poet endowed with a fine dramatic gift, a power of embodying an nature in a poem. He was not, I think, a dramatist, though

...imar by the ... pervaded the whol... the poem where his originality most strongl... ...n, he is at once dramatic and lyrical. He extends th... sphere of the lyric to a dramatic narration; and the fresh form intro... duced into poetry roused significant hostility. What is novel, as th... IDYLLS were, will always please and interest; what is new, if it be... force, inevitably generates revulsion. Tennyson, who was acutel... sensitive to criticism and unusually diffident, was almost outface... into a disbelief in MAUD; for many years it would seem he only con... fessed his fondness for it with an apology; but to the last, an... rightly, it was the favourite child of his imagination. MAUD ... probably the only one of his long poems which will stand as a whol... THE PRINCESS, beautiful as it is, rests upon a fantastic framewor... that has no foundation in human nature. The poetry is squandere... upon a triviality and outgrows the subject; yet not only the lyric... which are imperishable, but some of the superb love-scenes at t... end must surely survive. In MAUD alone one finds a story of tr... dramatic interest continuously narrated, a story thrilling with el... mental human passion. Yet how characteristic of Tennyson t... his single presentation of passion should be linked with the thoug... of madness; and even in MAUD love is not the disturber, it comes ... allay fever, not to inflame it. "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, sel... control"; there you have Tennyson's philosophy as embodied in h... life, his art, and his teaching. He does not, like Browning, welcom... the leap of our aboriginal self as making for good, as something ... will stand to us when the trained control of a life-time cracks in... stress; he believes in the disciplined mood, and that is in a certain se... his limitation. There is too little of the old Adam in him. Pow... manifested in repression rather than any passionate outbreak is f... him the true subject of poetry; his delight is in the beauty of orde... his most characteristic love poem of all is perhaps the splendid fra... ment LOVE AND DUTY. A mind so austere clothed itself strangely ... that sensuous and luxuriant style; but in MAUD for once the restrai... is abandoned, and the poet sets himself to put into words t... sheer joy of living, the uncalculating effervescence of youth.

The genesis of the poem is characteristic; it was written bac... wards. The stanzas beginning "O that 'twere possible" had be... composed long before the rest, and even published; another ly... was produced to explain the situation, and so the thing gre... Whether the narrative, the whole monodrama, was originally p... sent in some misty shape or no, whether it grew up by what Ten...

e keenest observation, always by unconscious habit trans- he impression into words, Tennyson acquired an inner vision ss distinct than any painter's, and the most miraculous skill ecting the precise word or form of words to render it; and so tained to those sudden descriptive touches which flash a whole ne on the consciousness. Never in all his life did he show a more gical instance of this skill than in the second stanza of CROSSING HE BAR,—the lines which he bade his son set at the end of every dition of his poems for a crowning utterance:—

> Sunset and evening star,
> And one clear call for me!
> And may be there no moaning of the bar,
> When I put out to sea.
> *But such a tide as moving seems asleep,*
> *Too full for sound and foam,*
> When that which drew from out the boundless deep
> Turns again home.

here you have a picture which no painter could render on canvas, or it is given alike to eye, ear, and mind. You see the gentle, resistless motion of the tide, you hear the hush as it sweeps by,—the silence when sound is looked for, the silence that one can say is heard; and you see the significance of that familiar strangeness. But there is no use in speaking of these stanzas; they are beyond all praise; the movement of the verse, the perfect suggestion and severe restraint of the imagery, and the majesty of the thought make them unforgettable. They are characteristic of all that is best in Tennyson: they have the beauty of metre, the beauty of description, and the elevation of thought which are the things common to all his work; and they have above and beyond all these the touch of magic which transforms admirable verse into great poetry.

There are of course judges who consider that apart from style, apart from his eye for nature, apart even from the lyrical inspiration, which is constant in no poet, Tennyson has a truer and more abiding greatness as a thinker. I cannot feel this. His intellectual reach is not sufficient to keep him living. THE TWO VOICES will scarcely retain its significance for a second generation; and even IN MEMORIAM will hardly go down to posterity's apprehension as a coherent whole. There are single poems in it, the utterances of single moods, blent, as Tennyson knew how to blend them, with a setting of landscape, that can scarcely be less eloquent to the future than to us. But the framework of thought, the answer to the questionings of a generation, will scarcely reach our sons. Tennyson was above all a mystic, preoccupied with that life which the senses get no grasp on, and in all ages there will be mystics to read him. But it is flesh and blood which will always appeal to humanity at large, not dreams or shadows. If one sums up the results of his life's thinking, it would seem that he rather pondered than thought. His

was a brooding mind; it rolled thoughts and grouped the great cloud masses, threw wonderful lights and splendours on but it did not pierce the clouds. It was not a trenchant int like Browning's; he never arrived clearly at separating the kn from the unknown. Yet from his ponderings he arrived at a f so unshakeable, and a morality so noble, that one questions if af all to future generations the best work of his old age may not ou weigh that of his youth. If one thinks of poems like THE PALAC OF ART, A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN, THE SLEEPING BEAUTY, what is clear is their extraordinary sensuous beauty, their feeling for loveliness of form and colour, their rendering that beauty in an equal beauty of sound and phrase. But when you set them beside CROSSING THE BAR, or the stanzas, scarcely less fine, of address to Lord Dufferin, they seem to grow unreal beside the majestic sincerity of that later utterance, the accent as of one who sees from a great height with full certainty of vision. "You praise the work said Coleridge," "but you do not reflect how much greater is the man than his work"; a strange utterance to come from Coleridge. No man's work ever expressed him more completely than Tennyson's, yet is not the whole man to be found rather in the later work than the earlier. Two elements are dominant in his poetry, the sensuous and the mystical; the sensuous rather in his earlier poems, the mystical in his later. Which will have the more abiding interest? Time alone can decide. This much seems clear to me; that no single poem of Tennyson's can stand beside ADONAIS or THE RHYME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER; that perhaps the ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE, and the ODE ON INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY are greater, if one can measure greatness, than anything of his; yet that posterity will class him with Shelley and Coleridge, Keats and Wordsworth, and that in all times there will be some to rank him on a level with any of the four. Byron and Scott scarcely enter into the comparison; yet some of Tennyson's songs have a kindred quality with Scott's, and there is no higher praise than this; while MAUD outdoes Byron in what Byron's contemporaries accounted his surest ground. But these comparisons are futile. We know that a great poet has lived among us; we can reflect with pleasure that he lacked nothing of due honour; and this Memoir comes most welcome to tell us of him as he was to those who saw him nearest, a figure Olympian in dignity, a nature loyal and lovable, heart, brain, body well matched, a true king among men.

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he chief ... umulative effect of the whole. ... so well guided as when he hit upon this form, ... yrical utterance of succeeding moods. For all his ... nately, I think, shapes itself down to that; the dramatic expression of single moods or even of a whole life's temper when it can be implified down to the unity of lyrical expression. So, in a way hat is not less truly dramatic than it is lyrical he expresses the ld farmer who stopped Thornaby waste; so he renders the passion of Rizpah, her whole woman's nature up in revolt against he world that killed her son, and feverishly clutching still in her ancy at the dead bones that are not dead to her;

> My baby, the bones that had sucked me, the bones that had laughed
> and had cried.

These are perhaps his highest achievements as an artist, these re dramatic creations. Yet what the world asks above all of a yrical poet is the expression of his own emotion; and even more rhaps than RIZPAH or THE NORTHERN FARMER, it will cherish oems like ULYSSES, where Tennyson renders a temper not foreign o his own. In MAUD, too, and LOCKSLEY HALL the undescribed peaker is surely that visionary self whom every artist entertains and sees in fancied situations. What keeps a poet live is what he can tell humanity about humanity, what he can ender of the mysterious thrill of life, the laughter and the s of things. A lyric poet may sometimes take on him the ovince of drama and make the world feel with some creature his own; but the world is always just as willing to feel with imself, to see life through his eyes. Only, it must be made to eel; and that is where Tennyson sometimes fails. That is hat will set a line between the dead and the living in his work fter years have gone over him. He was not like Wordsworth ho wrote vilely when inspiration was lacking. Tennyson never rote, and could not write vilely; in anything but the quality of ving life to his creations he was in almost every line that he wrote great poet, scarcely in technical qualities inferior to Milton. It may worth trying to separate the characteristics of his poetry which e common to all his work, from the finer and more essential spirit hich will keep much of it, unless we are all strangely deluded, ive for ever.

The first is of course his style, and his style needs no praise. ennyson could extract from the English language the richest

to him ... from night and Hades; every ... as if all were filled with yellow glowing sunlight ... gorgeous golden vapour; from which form after form bodies itself; naturally *golden* forms." And this style, this golden mystery of language, by whatever chemistry it came into being, was recognisable before he was out of his teens and did not fail him after eighty winters. Compare the earlier ŒNONE with the later, LOCKSLEY HALL with LOCKSLEY HALL SIXTY YEARS AFTER; whatever has altered for the worse it is not the manner. Yet no one would place the later poems in these pairs on a level with the earlier. The fervour of youth is out of them; they do not convey that thrill so unmistakeably present in LOCKSLEY HALL, and felt even in the colder beauty of ŒNONE.

ŒNONE is a good example of those poems about whose survival one would be doubtful. It is a masterpiece of a master in description and it formulated, perhaps for the first time, Tennyson's characteristic creed in ethics; but it will hardly stir another age to enthusiasm. Descriptive poetry is more apt than any other to pall on the reader. THE LOTOS-EATERS will survive, not for the magnificent opening stanzas, but for the song of those who crave for rest, who desire to put aside life's battle and drowse away into sleep under an unregarding heaven. That is dramatic expression of a mood and of a faith, or an unfaith, which humanity will always recognise. He would be a strange critic who could not feel the glory and the beauty of Tennyson's imaginary description, which, like the figure-pieces of Sir Joshua Reynolds (an artist who much resembles him), impressed his own generation far more than the less gorgeous landscapes, etched in with a few swift words from actual life. Yet the latter are what posterity will value. The Memoir tells us how he kept note-books like a painter, and jotted down effects in the form of words born of the moment's sensation. Tennyson himself explains to a correspondent his procedure. "*A the water-lily starts and slides*: suggestion, water lilies in my own pond seen on a gusty day with my own eyes. They did start and slide in the sudden puffs of wind till caught and stayed by the tithes of their own stalks, quite as true as Wordsworth's simile and more in detail." And here is a note almost at random from his journal of 1846. "Early next morning off by rail to Kehl, confusion about the two railways, douane, stop and see Cathedral, nave magnificent, rail to Basle, Three Kings, *green swift Rhine roaring against the piers*, Swiss fountain." Always going about the wor...

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

PUBLISHED IN 1852.

I.

Bury the Great Duke
 With an empire's lamentation,
Let us bury the Great Duke
 To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation,
Mourning when their leaders fall,
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II.

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?
Here, in streaming London's central roar.
Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III.

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,
Let the long long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,
And let the mournful martial music blow;
The last great Englishman is low.

IV.

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
Remembering all his greatness in the Past.
No more in soldier fashion will he greet

With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute:
Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,
Whole in himself, a common good.
Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
Our greatest yet with least pretence,
Great in council and great in war,
Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common-sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.
O good gray head which all men knew,
O voice from which their omens all men drew,
O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fall'n at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew!
Such was he whom we deplore.
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's victor will be seen no more.

V.

All is over and done:
Render thanks to the Giver,
England, for thy son.
Let the bell be toll'd.
Render thanks to the Giver,
And render him to the mould.
Under the cross of gold
That shines over city and river,
There he shall rest for ever
Among the wise and the bold.
Let the bell be toll'd:
And a reverent people behold

The towering car, the sable steeds:
Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,
Dark in its funeral fold.
Let the bell be toll'd:
And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd;
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem roll'd
Thro' the dome of the golden cross;
And the volleying cannon thunder his loss;
He knew their voices of old.
For many a time in many a clime
His captain's-ear has heard them boom
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom:
When he with those deep voices wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from shame;
With those deep voices our dead captain taught
The tyrant, and asserts his claim
In that dread sound to the great name,
Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well-attemper'd frame.
O civic muse, to such a name,
To such a name for ages long,
To such a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-echoing avenues of song.

VI.

Who is he that cometh, like an honour'd guest,
With banner and with music, with soldier and with priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest?
Mighty Seaman, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man,
The greatest sailor since our world began.
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,

To thee the greatest soldier comes;
For this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea;
His foes were thine; he kept us free;
O give him welcome, this is he
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
And worthy to be laid by thee;
For this is England's greatest son,
He that gain'd a hundred fights,
Nor ever lost an English gun;
This is he that far away
Against the myriads of Assaye
Clash'd with his fiery few and won;
And underneath another sun,
Warring on a later day,
Round affrighted Lisbon drew
The treble works, the vast designs
Of his labour'd rampart-lines,
Where he greatly stood at bay,
Whence he issued forth anew,
And ever great and greater grew,
Beating from the wasted vines
Back to France her banded swarms,
Back to France with countless blows,
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
Follow'd up in valley and glen
With blare of bugle, clamour of men,
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
And England pouring on her foes.
Such a war had such a close.
Again their ravening eagle rose
In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings,
And barking for the thrones of kings;

Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler down;
A day of onsets of despair!
Dash'd on every rocky square
Their surging charges foam'd themselves away;
Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;
Thro' the long-tormented air
Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
And down we swept and charged and overthrew.
So great a soldier taught us there,
What long-enduring hearts could do
In that world-earthquake, Waterloo!
Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
If aught of things that here befall
Touch a spirit among things divine,
If love of country move thee there at all,
Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine!
And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
In full acclaim,
A people's voice,
The proof and echo of all human fame,
A people's voice, when they rejoice
At civic revel and pomp and game,
Attest their great commander's claim
With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
Eternal honour to his name.

VII.

A people's voice! we are a people yet.
Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,
Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers;
Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set

His Briton in blown seas and storming showers,
We have a voice, with which to pay the debt
Of boundless love and reverence and regret
To those great men who fought, and kept it ours.
And keep it ours, O God, from brute control;
O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul
Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,
And save the one true seed of freedom sown
Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
That sober freedom out of which there springs
Our loyal passion for our temperate kings;
For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
And drill the raw world for the march of mind,
Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.
But wink no more in slothful overtrust.
Remember him who led your hosts;
He bad you guard the sacred coasts.
Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall;
His voice is silent in your council-hall
For ever; and whatever tempests lour
For ever silent; even if they broke
In thunder, silent; yet remember all
He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke;
Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power;
Who let the turbid streams of rumour flow
Thro' either babbling world of high and low;
Whose life was work, whose language rife
With rugged maxims hewn from life;
Who never spoke against a foe;
Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke
All great self-seekers trampling on the right:
Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named;

Truth-lover was our English Duke;
Whatever record leap to light
He never shall be shamed.

VIII.

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
He, on whom from both her open hands
Lavish Honour shower'd all her stars,
And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.
Yea, let all good things await
Him who cares not to be great,
But as he saves or serves the state.
Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory:
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self, before his journey closes,
He shall find stubborn thistle bursting
Into glossy purples, which outredden
All voluptuous garden-roses.
Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory:
He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has own
His path upward, and prevail'd,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.
Such was he: his work is done.
But while the races of mankind endure,
Let his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every land,

And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure:
Till in all lands and thro' all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory:
And let the land whose hearths he saved from shame
For many and many an age proclaim
At civic revel and pomp and game,
And when the long-illumined cities flame,
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
Eternal honour to his name.

IX.

Peace, his triumph will be sung
By some yet unmoulded tongue
Far on in summers that we shall not see:
Peace, it is a day of pain
For one about whose patriarchal knee
Late the little children clung:
O peace, it is a day of pain
For one, upon whose hand and heart and brain
Once the weight and fate of Europe hung.
Ours the pain, be his the gain!
More than is of man's degree
Must be with us, watching here
At this, our great solemnity.
Whom we see not we revere;
We revere, and we refrain
From talk of battles loud and vain,
And brawling memories all too free
For such a wise humility
As befits a solemn fane:
We revere, and while we hear
The tides of Music's golden sea
Setting toward eternity,
Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,

Until we doubt not that for one so true
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo,
And Victor he must ever be.
For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will;
Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
Round us, each with different powers,
And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul?
On God and Godlike men we build our trust.
Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's ears:
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears:
The black earth yawns: the mortal disappears;
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
He is gone who seem'd so great.—
Gone; but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own
Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in State,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.
Speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthly fancies down,
And in the vast cathedral leave him.
God accept him, Christ receive him.

NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE WELLINGTON ODE.

Tennyson issued his Ode on the day of Wellington's burial, and republished it a year after with many notable changes. This is one of his finest poems. It was fitting that the foremost man in England, who had worn his honours with a quiet simplicity for so many years in the "fierce light" which shines on a world-wide fame, and in whom the light never found anything mean or fearful, should, after his death, receive this great and impassioned tribute. What he did in politics was always questionable. He was nothing of a statesman, as Tennyson calls him. He proved his inability when he was called to the Premiership. Then he was first arrogant, and afterwards perplexed by the mischief he wrought. Indeed, he was profoundly ignorant of England; but, when he found out his ignorance, he had the good sense of a great general. He knew when to retreat, and he retreated, even though his retreat had the appearance of a flight. He stood "four-square to all the winds that blew," but when all the winds became one wind, he opened the doors to it and bade the crown and his peers give way. This was the wisest thing he did in his old age, and it is somewhat characteristic of Tennyson that except in one line, "rich in saving common sense," he takes no notice of it at all.

"Let all England mourn her greatest son, let all England thank God for him, and bury him with honour upon honour"—that is the motive of the beginning of the poem; and it is worthy to be felt by a poet and by a nation. Magnanimity and magnificence, great-mindedness and great-doing, are the life-blood of a people. To celebrate them with a lavish splendour when he who embodied them in life is dead, is a lesson in a people's education. Then Tennyson passes to the Duke's glory in war, and perhaps in all commemorative odes there is nothing finer than his imagination of Nelson waking from his grave in St. Paul's and wondering who was coming, with this national mourning, to lie beside him:

> "Who is he that cometh, like an honour'd guest,
> With banner and with music, with soldier and with priest,
> With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest?"
> Mighty Seaman, this is he
> Was great by land as thou by sea.
>
> * * * *
>
> This is he that far away
> Against the myriads of Assaye
> Clash'd with his fiery few and won;

and the poet, starting from this early battle, sketches with rapid and clear pencil the great wars till the day of Waterloo. I wish the division of the poem (vii.) beginning—

> A people's voice! we are a people yet—

were excluded from the poem. But that would be to wish away one of Tennyson's most characteristic utterances as a patriot. Nevertheless it is too exclusively English, too controversial, too much an attack on France, too contemptuous of the people whom he sees only as the mob; too fond of the force of great men to the exclusion of the force of the collective movements of the nation. A great artist should not overstep so much the limits of temperance; or, to put this otherwise, he should not lose his sympathy with the whole of humanity in his sympathy with his own country.

This is, however, as great a poem as the character was which it celebrated. The metrical movement rushes on where it ought to rush, delays where it ought to delay. Were the poem set by Handel, its rhythmical movements could scarcely be more fit from point to point to the things spoken of, more full of stately, happy changes. Moreover, the conduct of the piece is excellent. It swells upwards in fuller harmony and growing thought till it reaches its climax in the division (vi.) about Nelson and Wellington. Then it slowly passes downwards in solemn strains like a storm dying in the sky, and at the end closes in soft spiritual passages of ethereal sound, like the lovely clouds about the setting sun when the peace of evening has fallen on a tempestuous day. Its conduct is then the conduct of one form of the true lyric, whose climax is in the midst, and not at the close.—*Stopford A. Brooke.*

In the year 1850 Tennyson received the laurel, and almost immediately was called upon by the national sentiment to exercise the functions of his poetic office. The "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington" was the first, and remains the most ambitious, of his patriotic lyrics. This tribute to the "last great Englishman" may fairly be pronounced equal to the occasion; a respectable performance for Tennyson, a strong one for another poet. None but a great artist could have written it; yet it scarcely is a great poem, and certainly though Tennyson's most important ode, is not comparable with his predecessor's lofty discourse upon the "Intimations of Immotality." Several passages have become folk-words, such as "O good gray head which all men knew!", and

> "This is England's greatest son,—
> He that gain'd a hundred fights
> Nor ever lost an English gun";

but the ode upon the whole, is laboured, built up of high-sounding lines and refrains after the manner of Dryden, in which rhetoric often is substituted for imagination and richness of thought.

The Laureate never has been at ease in handling events of the day. To his brooding and essentially poetic nature such matters seem of no more moment, beside the mysteries of eternal beauty and truth, than was the noise of catapults and armed men to Archimedes studying out problems during the city's siege. If he succeeds at all with them, it is by sheer will and workmanship. Even then his voice is hollow, and his didacticism, as in "Maud," artificial and insincere.—*Stedman.*

Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, an illustrious British military commander and eminent statesman, was the third son of the Earl of Mornington, by Anne, daughter of Arthur Viscount Dungannon, and was born in 1769. The family name was *Wesley* which had been assumed by the Duke's grandfather, Richard Colley Esq., on succeeding, by bequest, in 1768, to the estates of Garret Wesley, Esq., of Dangan Castle, in the County of Meath, Ireland. As Arthur Wesley—for so he continued to style himself until 1797, at which time the paternal designation was changed to Wellesley by the first marquis—he received his education at Eton College, afterwards from a private tutor at Bringhton, and finally at the military academy of Angers in France. He obtained his first commission as ensign in the 73rd regiment of foot in 1787. After representing the borough of Trim, in the County of Meath, in the Irish Parliament and afterwards acting as aide-de-camp to the Earl of Westmoreland, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, he in 1794, went upon his first active service as lieutenant-colonel of the 33rd regiment, having been ordered to join the forces of the Duke of York in the Netherlands. In 1797 having obtained the rank of colonel, he landed in India. His career may be said to have commenced under the most favourable auspices, for, in 1798, his eldest brother arrived at Calcutta as Governor-General of India. In 1799 Wellesley was nominated Governor of Seringapatam and of Mysore; in which position he highly distinguished himself, both in the field and as an administrator. In 1803 he fought and gained the splendid victory of Assaye, where, with 8,000 men, he defeated the forces of Scindia, amounting to 30,000. He next compelled the Rajah of Berar to sue for peace. The following year he repaired to Bombay, where an address was presented to him, in which he was styled as equally great in the cabinet and in the field; from the British residents at Calcutta he received a sabre worth £1,000, whilst the army of the Deccan subscribed to present him with a service of plate of the value of 2,000 guineas; and having received the thanks of both Houses of Parliament, and been knighted, he, in 1805, set sail for England. Towards the close of the same year, he was appointed to the command of a brigade in the German expedition under Lord Cathcart; but in a few months the English returned without having been engaged with the enemy. In 1806 he married Lady Catherine Pakenham, second daughter of the Earl of Long-

ford; in 1807 he became Secretary for Ireland, was elected to the House of Commons, and, in the same year, participated in the Copenhagen expedition as brigadier, his division routing the Danes at Kioge, which town fell into his hands. Returning to England shortly afterwards, he resumed his seat in the House of Commons, and his post as Secretary for Ireland. In 1808, he was created lieutenant-general, and given the command of the army to be dispatched to the Peninsula. He was afterwards superseded in the chief command by Sir Harry Burrard, and after the convention of Cintra, to which he strongly objected, Sir Arthur Wellesley resigned his command, and returned to England. But when, in 1809, Napoleon, after having burst into Spain, had occupied Madrid, and after Soult had marched against Sir John Moore with an overpowering force, the national enthusiasm demanded that a great blow should be struck on land, and to Sir Arthur Wellesley was given the sole command of the war. On arriving in Portugal, he took the field with a force of about 25,000 men and immediately proceeded to drive Soult from Oporto, the French Marshal being disastrously routed. That was the first of the grand series of brilliant victories by which the Peninsular War was marked. He now entered Spain, formed a junction with Cuesta, the Spanish general, and fought and won the battle of Talavera, with 22,000 Englishmen against 50,000 Frenchmen. For this victory, he was created Baron Douro of Wellesley, and Viscount Wellington of Talavera. But, not being able to count upon the assistance of his Spanish allies, and with four French armies bearing down upon him from all sides, he resolved to withdraw into Portugal, where soon afterwards, he constructed the famous lines of Torres Vedras, by which he kept Lisbon in security, and dashed back the impetuous onslaught of the French with complete success. A series of brilliant victories followed, Badujor and Cuided Rodrigo were taken, and the battle of Salamanca was the most decisive victory the English commander had yet won is Spain. A month later he entered Madrid in triumph and afterwards received from his sovereign the title of Marquis. With several powerful French armies in the field, each of them as numerous as his own. Wellington, having failed to take Burgos, retreated to his old quarters within the frontiers of Portugal, and there spent the winter of 1812 —that winter during which Napoleon had lost 3,50,000 men beneath Russian snows. The campaign of 1813 opened auspiciously. The emperor, owing to his disaster in Russia, had been compelled to recall Soult from Spain, together with 20,000 men. There were thus left to oppose Wellington about more 70,000 men; but there were about 100,000 more in different parts of Spain, under Suchet and other commanders. The brilliant victories of Victoria and the Pyrenees drove the French from the Peninsula, and in November, 1813, Wellington descended into France, pursuing his

conquering course to Toulouse, from which, after some desperate fighting, Soult was driven. With this engagement the Peninsular War may be said to have ended. In 1814, after an absence of five years, the great commander, now the Duke of Wellington, landed in England, where his reception was unprecedentedly brilliant. His next employments were diplomatic. For a short time ambassador at the restored Bourbon Court at Paris, he, at the commencement of the year 1815, attended the general congress of European powers at Vienna. The deliberations of that brilliant assembly were suddenly broken up by the news that Napoleon had quitted the island of Elba, and entered France. The Duke of Wellington was nominated Commander-in-chief of the army to be concentrated in the Netherlands, and the crowning victory of Waterloo followed, and the greatest continental war came to a termination, having lasted during twelve years. On his return to England, the Duke of Wellington was received with all the honours that a grateful and enthusiastic nation could devise. In addition to the sums he had already received,—about half a million,—a grant of £200,000 was voted for the purchase of the mansion and estate of Strathfieldsaye in Hampshire. The King of the Netherlands conferred on him the title of Prince of Waterloo. In 1818 he was made Field-Marshal of Austria, Prussia, and Russia; and in 1819 appointed Master-General of Ordnance. With the year 1822 the Duke entered upon his life as a statesman. In 1827 he succeeded the Duke of York as Commander-in-chief, was Prime Minister from January 1828 to November 1830, and in 1842 resumed the office of Commander-in-chief, retaining it until his death. His opposition to the Reform Bill made him for a time very unpopular, and his residence, Apsley House, was attacked. In 1834 he was installed Chancellor of the University of Oxford, and in the same year became Secretary of State for foreign affairs. Afterwards as minister without office, he supported the free-trade measures of Sir Robert Peel. He died quietly and unexpectedly at Walmer Castle, where he occasionally resided as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, and his remains were interred, with every public honour, in St. Paul's Cathedral.

The following account of the Funeral of the Duke of Wellington is summarised from the (London) *Times* of the 18th November 1852:

Before daybreak on the morning of the 18th November 1852 the troops commenced to take up their positions in and about Whitehall. At eight o'clock the hangings of the tent covering the funeral car were unfurled, and the first minute-gun fired. Some idea of the grandeur, and extent of this great military display may be realized from the fact that,

though the Rifles led the way when the first gun was fired, it was an hour and a half before the car was in motion, and half an hour later still before the extreme rear started. The Rifles were then close upon Charing Cross [three miles from Chelsea Hospital by the route taken]. The route of the procession was from Whitehall, through St. James's Park, up Constitution-hill, and along Piccadilly, St. James's-street, Pall Mall, Charing Cross, the Strand, Fleet Street, and Ludgate Hill, to St. Paul's. Galleries crowded with spectators were erected along almost the entire line, while beneath these again, and closely packed, were spectators in the streets, who had gathered, it was estimated to the number of a million and-a-half. A few policemen were sufficient to preserve peace and order in this mighty multitude. The car reached the Cathedral door a few minutes past twelve o'clock. Under the dome on either side of the area rose the segments of an amphitheatre, in which were the seats allotted to the two Houses of Parliament, the foremost being occupied by the ministers, Judges, and high functionaries of the state. Following the choristers, along the nave came various groups of soldiers, the foreign marshals carrying the Duke's colours, and Prince Albert, with the sword of state before him, and a company of officers following. The coffin was conveyed upon a wheeled bier, the pall being flung back and the white feathers of the Duke's hat waving in the wind which swept along the nave. Dean Milman read the service, in a clear and sonorous voice. At its conclusion, Garter King-at-Arms proclaimed the style and titles of the Duke; a wand was broken and thrown down on the coffin; and the ceremony closed with a benediction pronounced by the Bishop of London. The military engaged in the procession were then marched back to their quarters, and the huge assembly of spectators quietly dispersed.

In addressing the House of Lords the following night, Lord Derby said: "When, amidst solemn and mournful music, slowly and inch by inch the coffin which held the illustrious dead descended into its last long resting-place, I was near enough to see the countenances of many of the veterans who were companions of his labours and of his triumphs, and was near enough to hear the suppressed sobs and all the hardly-checked tears, which would not have disgraced the cheeks of England's greatest warriors, as they looked down for the last time upon all that was mortal of our mighty hero. Honour, my lords, to the people who so well knew how to reverence the illustrious dead! Honour to the friendly visitors—especially to France, the great and friendly nation, that testified by the presence of their representative, their respect and veneration for his memory! They regarded him as a foe worthy of their steel. His object was not fame nor glory, but a lasting peace. We have buried in our greatest hero the man among us who had the greatest horror of war. The great object of this country is to maintain peace. To do that, however, a nation must possess the means of self-defence. I trust that we shall bear this in mind, not in words only, but in our actions and policy, setting aside all political and party considerations, and that we shall concur in this opinion—that, in order to be peaceful, England must be powerful; but that, if England ought to be powerful, she ought to be so in order that she should be more secure of peace."

I.

1. **The Great Duke.** During the latter part of his life the Duke of Wellington was familiarly spoken of as "the Duke," simply; and even in our days, he is often referred to as "the Great Duke."

2. **With an Empire's lamentation.** Wellington's remains were conveyed to Chelsea Hospital where they lay in state. "It was here seen what a hold he had upon the heart of the people. For seven days vast multitudes poured to the chamber in which all the stately solemnities that attend a great soldier's death were observed. Life-guardsmen, with arms reversed, stood like statues round the walls of the dimly-lighted, darkly-draped chamber. The decorations bestowed upon him in honour of his military achievements lay spread out near him. The Queen's excessive grief did not permit her to approach nearer than the middle of the Hall. He was buried on the 18th of November in St. Paul's Cathedral. The streets were lined with troops, the windows thronged with spectators, band after band swelled the 'Dead March' as the sad procession moved eastward." See Lord Derby's remarks quoted in the Introductory Note.

4. **To the noise of,** having as an accompaniment the noise of.

6. **Warriors carry. . . . . pall.** The pall-bearers of the Duke were military officers, as a matter of fact. We give the following description of a funeral cortège in European countries, for the benefit of the native student:

The ordinary cortège of a funeral is a hearse with a bier, on which is the coffin, covered with a pall, followed by carriages all in black, with black horses. In England the hearse, sometimes over-decorated with dark plumes, is closed instead of being open. In the more common class of funerals, the coffin, shrouded in a pall, is borne on spokes, or on the shoulders of bearers. All the attendants are in black. A certain etiquette as to pall-bearers (parties who hold ribbons attached to the pall) is observed; the relatives of the deceased taking their place nearest the head in the degree of consanguinity, and the same arrangement is maintained in lowering the coffin by cords into the grave.

Pall, a large black cloth thrown over a coffin at a funeral.

7. **Darkens hamlet and hall,** rich and poor alike mourn his loss. See note on l. 2. **Hamlet and hall,** the homes of the common people as well as of the rich and the great.

II.

9. **Here, in streaming London's central roar,** here in St. Paul's Cathedral, in the very heart of swarming and noisy London. St. Paul's Cathedral occupies a central position in London. **Streaming,** through which continuous streams of people are ever passing in different directions. The population of London is about $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions, or one-sixth of the total population of England and Wales. Some idea of the number of persons constantly passing to and fro may be formed from the fact that more than 107,000 foot-passengers, and over 20,000 vehicles, have been reckoned whilst crossing over London Bridge in 24 hours.

10. **Wrought for,** worked for (as a statesman).

III.

13. **Pageant,** procession or cortège—properly, a spectacle or display.

14. **An universal.** We prefer "a universal." The rule about *a* and *an* is that *an* should be used before a word beginning with a vowel or a silent *h*, and *a* in all other cases. Now, in applying this rule, we should be guided *not by the letter, but by the sound*, with which a word begins. That is, we must consider not whether the word as written begins with a consonant or a vowel, but whether it as pronounced begins with a *vowel-sound* or a *consonant-sound*. This is the reason why, when a word begins with a silent *h*, we use *an* before it. For when the initial *h* is silent, the word really begins with a *vowel-sound*, though it begins with a *consonant-letter*: the first sound in *honest* is not that of the consonant *h*, but of the vowel *o*. Similarly when a word begins with a *vowel-letter* but a *consonant-sound*, it follows that we should have *a* and not *an*. In the word *universal* the sound of the first syllable is exactly that of the word *yew*. It begins with a consonant sound, that of *y*, and should take *a* before it, not *an*. We say "a yew," and not "an yew," because the latter *sounds harsh*; and for the same reason we should say "*a* universal," and not "*an* universal," for "*an* universal," is exactly the same as "an *yew*-niversal," and would sound as harsh as "an yew."

From these considerations we get the following rule, as one that qualifies, or rather explains, the rule already stated: "If a word begins with a vowel, or a diphthong, but has its *first sound* that of *y*, or *w*, *a* and not *an* should be used before it." *Examples*: a *union* (= yu-nion), a *university*, *a useful* book, *a usurper*, *a ewe* (= yew), such *a one* (= won), a *once* common practice (= wonce).

N.B.—Some good writers, as Macaulay, nevertheless write *an* European,' '*an* universal,' and so on.

15. *Long, long procession.* See the description of the funeral procession given in the Introductory Note.

16. *Grow*, increase, by more and more joining it as it moves on. The crowd was estimated to number about a million and a half!

17. **Mournful martial music,** mournful military music. Note the striking alliteration, and the onomatopoetic character of the line.

18. **Is low**—in death; is dead.

IV.

19. **The last**—great Englishman.

20. **Remembering,** who remember; for we remember.

21-2. **No more in......street.** When the people saluted him as he passed, the Duke invariably acknowledged the salute by raising his hand to his hat, somewhat in the manner of an officer returning a salute.

23. **Our chief state-oracle,** the wisest statesman of our age and country. This description of the Duke is not in accordance with facts; for it cannot be said that he shone as a statesman, and his sagacity for once made a dismal failure in the estimate he formed of the necessity of parliamentary reform in 1830, though no one ever for a moment hesitated to admit that the Duke was perfectly honest and unselfish in his political, as he had been in his military, career. **Oracle,** any person reputed uncommonly wise, whose opinions are considered as of great authority, and whose decisions are never disputed—properly, the answer of a god, or some person reputed to be a god, among the ancients, to an inquiry made respecting some affair of importance, usually respecting some future event, as

the success of an enterprise or battle; hence the deity who was supposed to give the answer, and also the place where it was given; as, the Delphic *oracle*. **Are mute.** Perhaps Tennyson was thinking of Milton's "the oracles are dumb" (*Nativity Ode*, 173).

24. **Long-enduring,** long-suffering or patient; not easily provoked. **Blood,** temper of mind; disposition.

24 *et seq.* **Moderate, resolute, &c.** "In estimating his qualities, it must be remembered that no man of any age ever lived more publicly or in clearer daylight than he did. Every fault was noted, every action conned, every triumph criticised. With regard to his military capacity, comparisons have been instituted between him and others which are totally irrelevant. He was not in the situation of a Cæsar or a Napoleon. It was not competent to him, regardless of right and justice, to carve out grand schemes for the overthrow and conquest of nations. He was the general of a constitutional state and no man was ever more faithful to constitutional obligations. His work was assigned to him by the Government of his country, and his main task was only to determine and execute the most efficient methods for achieving given ends. It is beyond a doubt that he takes rank amongst the most accomplished strategists that the world has ever seen, nor is the brilliancy of that position impaired by the fact that he apparently attained to it less by sudden inspirations of genius than by patient processes of thought. He was neither a general of mere theory and routine, nor one who transacted warfare according to the rule of thumb. Whilst steadily proceeding on the well-established principles of military science, he exhibited, whenever a new emergency had to be encountered, a rich and ready fertility of resource. In some particulars he was a great military example. In his truthful honesty he scorned to colour success and palliate failure or even to excite his soldiers by exaggerated proclamations or rhetorical addresses and flatteries. The rigid probity which he observed in the conduct of war, especially towards those in whose country it was carried on, was an immense alleviation of its inevitable sufferings. His power of administration in the complicated details of warfare has rarely been surpassed; and whatever may be said about the personal attachment of his soldiers, there is no doubt that they always felt an implicit reliance on him and respected his justice and

his firmness. As a politician he is scarcely to be measured by existing standards. His views, whether upon the affairs of Europe or of his own country, were generally based upon careful investigation, whatever may be thought about the judgments he passed upon facts or the inferences he drew from them."

26. **Whole in himself,** complete in himself; having full confidence in his own powers and resources; entirely self-reliant. **A common good,** one who exercised an influence for good on all who came in contact with him.

27. **The man of amplest influence,** one who possessed the greatest influence over his fellow-men.

28. **Yet clearest of ambitious crime,** who yet was perfectly free from the guilt of employing that influence to promote any ambitious aims of his own. **Ambitious crime,** crime of ambition.

29. **Our greatest yet with least pretence.** "He had performed the highest services to his country, and, indeed, to Europe, and the honours he had consequently received were such as would tire even a Spaniard. While so much honoured, the Duke was a man of such simplicity of nature, that he never appeared in the slightest degree uplifted." **Pretence,** assumption of importance; self-importance.

30. **Great in council,** Wellington's parliamentary oratory was plain and to the point: he spoke without fluency or art; yet his strong sense and practical sagacious judgment gave him great weight with his brother peers. **Great in war.** See *Introd.* II for Wellington's glorious military career.

31. **The foremost captain of his time.** In the general order issued by the Queen to the army on Wellington's death, he was characterised as "the greatest commander whom England ever saw." **Captain,** military leader; general—the wider sense of the term.

32. **Rich in saving common-sense,** liberally gifted with the sound practical wisdom which saves its possessor from committing errors. Wellington's "saving common sense" was illustrated by his conduct in regard to the Catholic Emancipation Bill. He was strongly opposed to the concession but resolved to make it. He thought that nothing else would satisfy Ireland or prevent a civil war; and with characteristic energy he discarded all half-measures and supported the

Bill unconditionally. The Act was passed and Roman Catholics, like the Dissenters, entered Parliament. Again, when Peel brought in his bill for repealing the Corn Laws in 1846, Wellington believing the step to be inevitable, yielded in spite of his aversion, because he wished to maintain a Conservative Government "for the sake of the Queen and of the religious and other ancient institutions of the country." See the concluding sentences of the extract in the notes on ll. 24 *et seq*.

34. **In his simplicity sublime,** sublime in his simplicity; commanding the highest respect and awe by the very simplicity of his character. Wellington's apartments at Walmer Castle were furnished in the simplest possible way, and his habits were as plain and simple as his rooms. He made his little bedroom serve also for his library and his study. His iron bedstead was only three feet wide, and had a mattress three inches thick; he had one coverlet, but no blankets, and was accustomed to carry his pillow with him when he travelled. He rose between six and seven, walked on the ramparts, and at nine breakfasted on plain tea and bread and butter. In camp he wore a blue frock-coat when no fighting was anticipated; a grey coat with a short white cloak, by which he was readily distinguished, was the signal for danger and battle. A sword, a low cocked-hat, and Wellington boots, completed his costume; for he only wore a sash on great occasions. But he was most familiar to his countrymen in the blue coat, white waistcoat, and low hat, which was his almost invariable dress. He had a contempt for great-coats, and never wore one, though in cold weather he condescended to a short cape. Here we may quote from what the Queen wrote in her journal when she heard of the Duke's death: "One cannot think of this country without the 'Duke,'—an immortal hero! In him centred almost every earthly honour a subject could possess. His position was the highest a subject ever had; above party, looked up to by all, revered by the whole nation, the friend of the Sovereign; and how simply he carried these honours! With what singleness of purpose, what straightforwardness, what courage, were all the motives of his actions guided! The crown never found, and I fear never will, so devoted, loyal, and faithful a subject, so staunch a supporter. To us his loss is irreparable, for his readiness to aid and advise, if it could be of use to us, and to overcome any and every

difficulty, was unequalled. His experience and knowledge of the past were so great, too; he was a link which connected us with bygone times, with the last century. Not an eye will be dry in the whole country."

35. **Gray head.** Wellington's hair, which was originally black, became perfectly white in his old age.

36. **Voice from......drew,** a person in whose sagacity and foresight men had such confidence that they forecast future events by the aid of his utterances.

37. **Iron nerve......true,** a man of unshaken courage and self-command, who never missed a legitimate opportunity for the exercise of those qualities. It was the union of these qualities with an iron constitution which obtained for him his current sobriquet of "Iron Duke," which was, it appears, not originally given, but only transferred to him from an iron steamboat called after him, because the title seemed to express felicitously his conspicuous qualities.

38. **Tower of strength,** strong tower; man of unshaken firmness. The expression is taken from *Richard* III, V, iii: "The king's name is a tower of strength"; compare *Proverbs*, XVIII, 10: "The name of the Lord is a strong tower."

39. **Stood four-square...blew,** confronted with resolute courage all dangers and troubles, from whatever direction they came. The idea is that of a square tower built so strongly that each wall is able to resist the strongest winds that may blow from that side.

41. **Self-sacrifice of life**—a curious phrase for "sacrifice of his own life," that is, of his own powers and energies. *Self-sacrifice* means "sacrifice of one's self," so that "self-sacrifice of life," literally construed, would be "sacrifice of one's self of life," which is absurd. Wellington's devotion to duty was the leading feature of his character.

42. **The great World-victor's victor,** he who conquered Napoleon, the conqueror of the world. Compare the French phrase "*le vainquer du vainquer de la terre,*" the conqueror of the conqueror of the earth. Napoleon is called, hyperbolically, "World-victor," because he subdued the greater part of Europe, and some part of Africa (Egypt) and of Asia (Syria). Napoleon Buonaparte, Emperor of the French, was born in Corsica on the 15th August, 1769, and entered the French

army at an early age. His military successes soon raised him to high commands in the Republican army; and, in 1799, he obtained the supreme power under the title of First Consul. He became Emperor in 1804, and made his brother Joseph, King of Naples; Louis, King of Holland; and Jerome, King of Westphalia. He utterly crushed the power of Austria and Prussia in the disastrous battles of Marengo (1800), Austerlitz (1805), Jena (1806), and Wagram (1809). He had married in 1796, Josephine, Viscountess Beauharnais, but his desire of a son and successor led him to divorce her in 1810, and marry Maria Louisa, daughter of Francis, Emperor of Austria. The fruit of this marriage was a son, Napoleon Francis, Duke of Reichstadt, who died at the age of twenty-one. Buonaparte's power was greatly weakened by the failure of his Russian campaign, in 1812, and he was compelled to abdicate two years later, and retire to the island of Elba. He escaped from this place in February 1815, and again disturbed the peace of Europe; but his political career was finally closed by his defeat at the battle of Waterloo, June 18th, 1815. He was sent to St. Helena, by the mutual agreement of the allies, and died there in 1821.

V.

43. **All is over and done,** he has accomplished his life's work.

44-5. **Render thanks......son,** thank God, O England, for having given thee so great a son.

46. **The bell,** that is, the Great Bell of St. Paul's, which is only tolled at the funeral of members of the Royal Family, the Bishop of London, the Dean of St. Paul's, and the Lord Mayor. Its being tolled at Wellington's death was, of course, a special honour. The bell is 10 feet in diameter, and weighs over five tons while its clapper weighs 180 pounds. The clock of St. Paul's strikes the hours upon the Great Bell, which has been heard at midnight twenty miles off. It was cast in 1716.

47. **Render him to the mould,** to restore him to the dust from which he was taken; consign his remains to the earth. **Mould,** soil, earth.

49. **Under the cross of gold,** in St. Paul's Cathedral, under the gilt cross which surmounts its dome. St. Paul's

Cathedral is the metropolitan church of London, a magnificent edifice by Sir Christopher Wren, standing on the site of an older Cathedral, usually known as Old St. Paul's which was burnt down in the Great Fire of London, 1666, and which itself was reared on the site of one which was burnt down in 1807. The site is said to have been originally occupied by a temple of Diana. St. Paul's Cathedral is 550 feet in length and 125 feet in width except in the west end where it is 180 feet in width. The dome is 420 feet in circumference and 145 feet in diameter on the outside, and the top of the gilt cross which surmounts it is 404 feet from the ground.

51. **Over city and river,** over London and the Thames.

52. **Among the wise and the bold.** St. Paul's Cathedral contains the graves of Sir Christopher Wren, its architect; Sir Joshua Reynolds; Foley, the sculptor; Sir Edwin Landseer and J. M. W. Turner, the painters; Rennie, the builder of Waterloo Bridge; Professor Palmer; Boyce and Attwood, the musicians; Nelson; Collingwood; General Picton of Waterloo fame; &c.

54. **Let a reverent people behold,** let the people behold with reverence.

55. **The towering car.** Wellington's coffin was carried to the grave on a sumptuous funeral car partly built up of guns taken in battle by him, and drawn by twelve black horses richly caparisoned. **Towering,** lofty. **Sable,** of the colour of the sable, a small animal of the weasel kind, from which a valuable black fur is obtained; black.

56. **Its blazoned deeds,** the names of Wellington's victories inscribed on it in gold letters. **Blazoned,** painted in bright colours.

57. **Its funeral fold,** the black pall with which the coffin on it is covered.

59. **And a deeper.....knolled,** and let the hearts of those who hear it toll respond to it with even a deeper feeling of sorrow than it expresses. **Knolled,** sounded as a bell. *Knell* and *knoll* are conjugate forms.

60. **Sorrowing anthem,** funeral hymn; dirge. **Rolled,** made to vibrate.

61. **The dome of the golden cross,** St. Paul's Cathedral: see l. 49, and note.

62. **And the volleying......loss,** and let the loud sound of cannon discharged with sudden bursts, proclaim the fact that he is gone. The allusion is to the minute guns fired at the funeral—eighty, fired at intervals of a minute, being the number representing the years of his life. **Volleying,** discharged with sudden bursts of sound.

63. **He knew their voices of old,** he was familiar with their sound from long ago (on the field of battle).

64. **In many a clime**—in India, Denmark, Spain, Portugal, France, and the Netherlands: see *Introd. II.*

65. **Captain's-ear.** Here the possessive case is used in a descriptive sense, with an adjectival force: "I'll knock your *knave's* pate" (*Shakespeare*)—I'll knock your pate which is the pate of a knave, *i.e.*, your *knavish* pate. Spencer has "her *angel's* face," for "her *angel* (or angelic) face." So, "Pity and *woman's* (—womanly) compassion" (*Longfellow*); "the *mother's* (—motherly) nature of Althea." (*Lowell*). **Boom**—an onomatopoetic word descriptive of the hollow sound or roar of cannon.

66. **Bellowing,** announcing by their roar. **Victory**—to one side (that is, his side). **Doom,** unhappy fate—to the enemy.

67. **Those deep voices,** the boom of the cannon; that is, the booming cannon. **Wrought with,** employed as instruments for effecting his purposes.

68. **Realms and kings**—as Spain and Portugal, and their kings.

69. **Taught,** taught a lesson to; chastised. 70-71. **The tyrant**—Napoleon. **And asserts,** and now, at his funeral, asserts. **Asserts his claim name**—because that sound reminds people of the deeds by which he won his great fame as a general.

72. **So pure of blame,** so free from all reproach.

73. **In praise......the same.** The allusion is to the unpopularity which Wellington incurred by his opposition to the Reform Bill. He said: "I am not only not prepared to bring forward any measure of this nature, but I will at once declare that as far as I am concerned, as long as I hold any situation in the Government of this country, I shall always feel it my duty to resist such measures when proposed by others." An avowal so unreserved exceeded the limits of a

wise prudence and roused a storm of odium. The Press, which perhaps he had never fairly treated, was loud in his abuse. For the time he was execrated by the people. He was groaned at in the streets. The windows of Apsley House were broken by a furious mob just as the Duchess was breathing her last. Wellington caused iron shutters to be put up as a protection; but a few months later, on the rejection of the Bill by the Lords, his windows were again broken before the shutters could be drawn and some pictures which he highly prized were injured. His life was threatened and a plot was formed to destroy him on his journey from London to the country; but he received timely warning and frustrated the attempt by starting some hours sooner than was expected. He travelled fully armed. Once more, on the 18th of June, 1832, the anniversary of his great victory at Waterloo, his life was in danger. He was riding from the Mint, accompanied only by a groom, when he was recognized and menaced by a multitude of exasperated malcontents. One man tried to drag him from his horse but was prevented by the groom; and a gentleman, seeing Wellington's danger, interposed his carriage between him and the crowd, breaking the immediate pressure from behind.

74. **Well-attempered frame,** a mental constitution in which the elements of character were combined in just proportions; a well-constituted mind, too strong to be affected by external circumstances. Compare Antony's description of Brutus's character:

> "His life was gentle, and the elements
> So mixed in him that Nature might stand up
> And say to all the world 'This was a man.'"—*Julius Cæsar.*

75. **Civic muse,** the poetry of the country, that is, of England—spoken of as the tutelary goddess of English poetry. The Muses, in classical mythology, were inspiring goddesses of song and divinities presiding over the different kinds of poetry, and over the arts and sciences. They were the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, and born in Persia at the foot of Mount Olympus. Mount Helicon, the wells of Aganippe and Hippocrene, and Mount Parnassus were sacred to them. There were *nine* Muses: (1) *Calliope,* the Muse of epic poetry; (2) *Clio* of history; (3) *Euterpe,* of lyric poetry; (4) *Melpomene,* of

tragedy; (5) *Terpsichore*, of choral dance and song; (6) *Erato*, of erotic poetry and mimic imitation; (7) *Polyhymnia*, of the sublime hymn; (8) *Urania*, of astronomy; and (9) *Thalia*, of comedy and idylic poetry. The Muses are called *Aonides*, because they frequented Helicon and the fountain of Aganippe, in the part of Bœotia called Aonia; and *Castalides*, from the fountain Castalia on Mount Parnassus, sacred to them.

75-8. **To such a name......fame,** Compare these lines in respect of their structure, Dryden's lines with:

> Happy, happy, happy pair
> None but the brave
> None but the brave
> None but the brave deserves the fair.—*Alexander's Feast*, 12-5.

And Pope's lines:

> Eurydice still trembled on his tongue,
> Eurydice the woods,
> Eurydice the floods,
> Eurydice the rocks, and hollow mountains rung.

77-9. **To such a name......song,** keep clear for ages to come a wide passage to the niche which so famous a name occupies in the Temple of Fame, so that the poets of his country may freely repair thither and make the place unceasingly resound with his praise; (without figure) may the poets of his country never cease to celebrate his fame in their verse.

VI.

80-82. **Who is he that cometh, &c.** The question is supposed to be asked by Nelson, near whose grave Wellington was buried. Both the graves are in the East Crypt. We may add that it was by the Queen's wish that Wellington was buried in that particular spot. The Earl of Derby, Premier, in the letter which he wrote by the Queen's command to the Home Secretary, says: "It is Her Majesty's wish, should no unforeseen impediment arise, that the mortal remains of the late illustrious and venerated Commander-in-Chief should, at the public expense, and with all the solemnity due to the greatness of the occasion, be deposited in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul's, there to rest by the side of Nelson, the greatest military by the side of the greatest naval chief who ever reflected lustre upon the annals of England."

83. **Mighty Seaman.** Horatio Nelson, Viscount Nelson (1758-1805), the greatest of British Admirals. Before he was quite twenty-one, he attained the rank of post-captain, and in no long time he made for himself a brilliant reputation. In 1739, appointed to the *Agamemnon*, he took a distinguished part, among other services, in the siege of Bastia, and Calvi in Corsica, losing an eye at the last of these; and in the celebrated action of Sir John Jervis off Cape St. Vincent with the Spanish fleet, to a manœuvre of extreme and masterly daring, executed by Nelson in defiance of orders, that officer was mainly indebted for the splendid success obtained, and the peerage with which it was rewarded. On his return to England in 1797, he was received with general acclamation. He was invested with the Order of the Bath, and a pension of £1,000 a year was voted to him. Being next year intrusted with a fleet, he signalised this, his first independent command of any magnitude, by the stupendous victory of the Nile, memorable in naval annals as the completest annihilation of an enemy on record. Honours were now from all quarters showered upon him; and in particular the gratitude and enthusiasm of his countrymen were signified by the title bestowed on him of Baron Nelson of the Nile, and a grant of £2,000 a year for his own life, and the lives of his two immediate successors. For his services immediately subsequent, in effecting the expulsion of the French from Naples, the Neapolitan King rewarded him with the dukedom of Bronte and a domain of £3,000, a year. His next magnificent exploit was the Battle of Copenhagen in 1801, in which, after a struggle of terrible severity, he shattered the naval power of Denmark, and along with it the dreadful coalition against England of the three northern kingdoms. In the earlier part of 1805, glowing with fierce ardour and impatience, he had chased half round the world a French fleet of nearly double the force of his own, scared by the very terror of his name, and on the morning of the memorable 21st October of that year he saw before him the combined navies of France and Spain moving to meet him. Ere night, the power of France upon the seas was annihilated, and her threatened invasion of England had become an abortive dream. But Nelson was no more. He died as such men wish to die, amid the thunders of his mightiest victory. His remains were publicly interred in St. Paul's Cathedral on the 9th January, 1806. The

character of Nelson was, for a man of his greatness unusually simple and transparent. A more absolute singleness of aim and aspiration than his, it is difficult even to conceive of. Literally on fire with that ardour and passion of enthusiasm, without some tincture of which scarce any man perhaps has ever yet achieved distinction, he was driven but imperiously in one direction. The greatest of sailors—he was a sailor and little else. Of his genius for command, it would be idle to speak at large. In coolness, foresight, promptitude, instant intuitive decision, and a daring which, even when it seemed at times to touch temerity, was yet regulated throughout by the nicest calculations of reason, he has perhaps never been quite equalled on the element.

84. **Was**, who was.

86-88 **The greatest......the greatest soldier.** See the extract from the Earl of Derby's letter quoted in the note on ll. 80-82.

87. **To the roll.** See l. 4, and note. **Roll,** the uniform beating of a drum with strokes so rapid as scarcely to be distinguished by the ear.

91. **His foes were thine,** he fought against the same enemies as thou didst (namely, the French and the Danes).

94. **By thee,** near thee; beside thee.

97. **Nor ever lost an English gun.** We have Wellington's own authority for this statement. The only two guns he ever lost he recovered the next day: this was at the battle of Salamanca.

99. **Myriads,** immense numbers. *Myriad* literally means ten thousand (Gr. *myrios*, *myriados*). **Assaye,** a village in the Nizam's Dominions, which claims notice chiefly as the scene of the first great victory of the Duke of Wellington, then Major-General Wellesley, won on the 23rd September, 1803. The British troops in action were only about 8,000, while the Mahrattas under Scindia and the Rajah of Berar numbered 50,000, of whom 10,000 were commanded by French officers, 98 pieces of cannon, 7 standards, all the baggage and a large part of the ammunition of the Mahrattas fell into the hands of the conquerors, whose military supremacy was soon acknowledged over a great portion of India.

100. **Clashed with......won.** The battle of Assaye was mainly won by a fierce charge which Wellington (or rather Wellesley, for he was only Major-General Wellesley then) made at the head of an English regiment of foot, and which threw the enemy into irretrievable disorder. **Clashed,** charged.

101. **Underneath another sun**—poetical for "in another country."

103. **Affrighted.** The French held nearly the whole of Spain and were preparing to march on Lisbon, Wellington having withdrawn from Spain to Portugal, where he was making active, but secret, preparations for the defence of Lisbon.

104-5. **The treble works......rampart lines,** the famous lines of Torres Vedras, within which Wellington took refuge in 1810, when he found it impossible to defend the frontier of Portugal against the French armies; and from which, in the year following, he issued on that career of slow and hard-won victory, which ended in the expulsion of the French from the Peninsula. The *first*, or outermost of these lines, extending from Alhandra, on the Tagus, to the mouth of the Sizandro, on the sea-coast, and following the windings of the hills was 29 miles long and was fortified by 30 redoubts and 140 guns; the *second* (and by far the most formidable) lay from 6 to 10 miles behind the first, stretching from Quintella, on the Tagus, to the mouth of the St. Lorenza, a distance of 24 miles; the *third*, situated to the south-west of Lisbon, at the very mouth of the Tagus, was very short, being intended to cover a forced embarkation, if that had become necessary. These enormous defences occupied more than five hundred square miles, and were further strengthened by a network of batteries, abattis, forts, and roads, interwoven with streams and mountains, art being applied with consummate skill to supplement nature. Mountains were scarped, rivers dammed up, bridges mined, and redoubts erected at all available points to the number of one hundred and fifty, with six hundred guns. **Laboured,** formed with great labour. **Rampart lines,** lines of fortifications.

106. **Where he greatly stood at bay.** Wellington entered the lines of Torres Vedras on the 10th October, 1810. Massena, the French general, came up three days afterwards, and was filled with despair at the sight. After viewing them

about a month, he retired in the middle of November into winter quarters, without having attempted anything. Towards the end of April 1811, Massena, who had received reinforcements which swelled his army to 40,000 foot and 5,000 horse, re-entered Portugal with the view of relieving the fortress of Almeida. Wellington marched to oppose him with 32,000 foot and 1,200 horse. They met at Fuentes de Onoro, on the evening of May 3rd ; a fierce struggle ensued for the possession of the place, and ultimately the French were driven out. Early on the morning of the 5th, Massena vigorously renewed the attack, which was kept up till evening, when the French retired with great loss. A few days after they evacuated Almeida, the last stronghold belonging to the French in Portugal. **Greatly,** nobly ; gallantly. **Stood at bay**, faced his pursuers. An animal is said to stand at bay when, being chased till escape becomes impossible, he turns round and faces his pursuers, and shows fight.

107. **Whence he issued forth anew**—in pursuit of the retreating Massena ; whom he overtook as Fuentes de Onoro : see the first note on l. 106.

108. **Great and greater**—poetical for "greater and greater."

109. **The wasted vines,** the vineyards of Spain which the French had laid waste.

111. **Countless blows**, numberless victories—an excusable exaggeration. Among these victories we may name Albuera, Merida, Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz, Salamanca, and Vittoria.

112. **Till o'er the hills her eagles flew,** till her troops fled over the Pyrenees into France. On the 21st June, 1813, Wellington gained the splendid victory of Vittoria, over the French army under Soult. The French retreated by Pampeluna and crossed the Bidassoa at Irun. On the 18th July, Soult arrived in Spain, and on the 24th July, having concentrated his forces at St. Jean Pied de Port, he attacked the British right at Roncesvalles on the 25th July, 1813. For five consecutive days were the Allies and the French engaged in attack and defence. These engagements are known as the Battles of the Pyrenees. At length, on the 1st August, Soult, having been defeated in several engagements, was in full retreat for France. On the 8th October, 1813, Wellington crossed the Bidassoa and

entered France with a part of his troops. On the 10th November, Soult opposed Wellington's passage of the Nivelle, but was defeated and compelled to retire to his entrenched camp at Bayonne. **Her eagles,** the imperial standards of France. The ensign or flag of the Roman legion was an eagle with extended wings, made of gold or silver, and borne on the top of a spear: hence the common phrase: "the Roman eagle" for "the Roman flag." Napoleon adopted the eagle as the standard of the French regiments.

114. **Glen,** narrow valley.

115. **Blare,** loud sound.

119-20. **Again,** that is, after Napoleon's escape from Elba in 1815. **Their ravening eagle rose in anger,** the French armies started up again fiercely, eager to conquer and to ravage. **Wheeled on Europe-shadowing wings,** being carried forward in circling flight over all Europe; threatening every country of Europe with invasion and overthrow. **Wheeled,** carried forward in circles, like those in which eagles fly. The French eagles are said *to have been wheeled*, not *to have wheeled*, because unlike literal eagles, they were *carried* by the troops. **Shadowing,** darkening; hence, filling with alarm; threatening.

120. **Barking,** clamouring; screaming with loud discordant sounds.

122. **One,** namely, Wellington. **Who sought but Duty's iron crown,** whose aim was simply to do his duty in the face of danger and opposition. The reward which Duty bestows is not showy or splendid, and is therefore called her *iron* crown, while that which Glory bestows might be called *golden*. Napoleon sought glory, but Wellington's "leading idea in life was the duty he owed to his country and its government, and with the performance of *that* he always appeared perfectly satisfied."

123. **On that loud sabbath.** The battle of Waterloo was fought on a Sunday. **Sabbath.** According to the Bible account, God created the world in six days, and rested on the seventh, which He set apart for Himself as a holy day. The original Sabbath was Saturday, and the Jews still have their Sabbath (literally, rest) on that day. Christ having risen from the dead on Sunday, the Christian Church has made that day the day of rest. **Loud**—with the din of war.

124. **A day of onsets of despair**, a day of desperate charges (by the French). Having arranged his communication with Blucher, the Prussian general, who was at Ligny (where Napoleon defeated him with great loss two days before Waterloo), Wellington retired with an army of 67,000 men to Waterloo, which he reached on the afternoon of the 17th June, 1815. Notwithstanding that it poured with rain, they bivouacked that night on the field in the order of battle. On the same day, Napoleon formed a junction with Ney, but his entire army, numbering 72,000, was not in the field till the following morning, Sunday the 18th June, 1815. On this memorable day, the celebrated Battle of Waterloo was fought. About 11 A.M., the French commenced the battle by a furious attack upon the farm and wood of Hongoumont, one of the most important points. The wood was at length carried by the French, and the engagement became general. The French had also succeeded in taking the farmhouse of La Haye Sainte, but both this and the wood around Hongoumont, were recovered by the British. The English troops acted principally on the defensive, and the French cavalry, in their repeated charges, could make no impression on their squares. The battle was most obstinately maintained, for both commanders were hourly expecting reinforcements. Wellington was waiting for Blucher, and Napoleon for Gronchy. Neither came, and Napoleon determined to decide the day by a final charge of the Old Guard, which had been kept in reserve. Ney, "the bravest of the brave," led them on. The English guards were lying down to avoid the French artillery; when the enemy was within fifty yards, the order was given to rise and fire; the serried ranks could not withstand the withering volley; they wavered, the moment was at hand, and down the hill charged the brave English bearing the foe before them. "The day was won, and Napoleon gave the order to retreat, for the Prussians were on the field, and immediately commenced the pursuit, as the British, weary with hard fighting, were unequal to the task. Three hundred pieces of cannon, with ammunition and baggage, including Napoleon's carriage, fell into the hands of the Allies." It is estimated that from the 15th to the 18th June, the Allies lost 24,000, and the French, 27,000 killed, wounded, and prisoners.

125. **Dashed**—referring to *charges*. The metaphor is from

waves dashing themselves against rocks, and being dissolved into harmless foam. **Rocky square,** square which stood as firm as a rock. Wellington had formed his infantry into squares, which bristled with bayonets and held their ground as though rooted to the earth. The French army made efforts by force and stratagem to break the English squares, but found them impenetrable, Napoleon watched their resistance with amazement, exclaiming "I could never have believed that the English had such fine troops."

126. **Surging,** rolling forward like billows. **Charges,** charging bodies of cavalry. **Foamed themselves away,** dissolved away into foam; were completely shattered.

127. **Last,** at last. **The Prussian trumpet blew.** Wellington would not give his troops the order for a general advance till he was assured that the Prussian reinforcements under Blucher were close at hand. At seven o'clock in the evening Bulow's corps of Prussians which had arrived at Planchenoit, began to engage the French right which had taken up their opposite to that village. Napoleon's chances were now desperate, and he gave his Old Guard the order to advance, with what result we have already seen (see note on l. 124). Wellington now felt that he was strong enough to assail the enemy himself. The Prussians were close at hand, and with the last rays of the setting sun, he gave the order long and feverishly waited for.

128. **Long-tormented air,** air which had been agitated so long with the din of battle.

129. **Heaven flashed .....ray.** "As they [the English and German troops] joyously sprang forward against the discomfited masses of the French, the setting sun broke through the clouds...and glittered on the bayonets of the allies, while they in turn poured down into the valley." (Creasy's *Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World.*) **Jubilant,** joyful—properly, shouting with joy.

130. **And down......overthrew.** When Wellington gave the final order for the whole line to advance, "the great tide of pent-up manhood, which with patient resolution had stood on the plateau since early morning with scarce a murmur, now swept grandly forward—infantry, horse, and guns in one imposing mass—which carried every French position, and drove

the relics of the Grand Army along wreck-strewn roads towards the frontier of France."

132. **Long-enduring.** The English troops had been engaged all day in repelling the furious charges of the French, the order to advance not having been given till the sun was setting, and they were so worn out with fatigue that after the victory they had to leave the pursuit of the enemy to the Prussians.

133. **That world-earthquake, Waterloo,** the battle of Waterloo which entirely changed the destinies of the whole world.

134. **Tender and true,** tender-hearted, and loyal to thy country. Nelson's heart was as soft as a woman's, and overflowed with all liberal generosities. He had but to be known to be beloved; and of the tender chivalry of his relations with his gallant brethren in arms, it is touching to read. Of his loyalty to his country, we need say nothing: his whole career illustrates it, and especially his last words "Thank God, I have done my duty."

135. **From taint of craven guile,** from the least stain of cowardly cunning or duplicity. Guile is called craven or cowardly, because it is only moral cowardice that makes one resort to it.

136. **Silver-coasted**—alluding to the white chalk cliffs on the southern coast of England, which glitter like silver in the moonlight.

137. **The Baltic.** The reference is to the battle of the Baltic. On the 12th March 1801 the fleet of eighteen sail of the line, with a number of frigates, boats, &c., set sail from Yarmouth Roads, under the command of Admiral Sir Hyde Parker and Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson. The English Fleet passed through the Sound, and on the 30th March, anchored near the Island of Huen. The whole of the Danish fleet was stationed off Copenhagen, which was defended by powerful floating and land batteries. Nelson, who was entrusted with the attack, was anxious to commence at once, before the ice broke up and liberated the Russian fleet. Parker was to attack the Crown batteries whilst Nelson advanced into the harbour on the 2nd April, 1801. The *Bellona* and the *Russell* grounded, when Parker doubtful of success, hoisted the signal to

desist, which Nelson refused to see (placing his telescope to his blind eye) and immediately hoisted his own signal for closer action, and ordered it, with his colours, to be nailed to the mast. The Danes fought most bravely, but by 3 P.M. nearly all their ships had struck. Nelson now sent a message on shore with a flag of truce, to prevent further bloodshed. An armistice was agreed on, and the Danes withdrew from the Armed Neutrality (or compact entered into by Russia, Prussia, Germany, Sweden, and Denmark, for the purpose of protecting their trade against England, who insisted on the right of searching vessels belonging to neutral powers. This was a most glorious victory for Nelson, who received the thanks of his country and a viscountcy. **The Nile.** The reference is to the Battle of the Nile. Nelson, on the 1st August, 1798, discovered the French fleet anchored in the Bay of Aboukir, in the form of a crescent, so close to the shore that it was thought impossible to force a passage between them and the land. Though Nelson had but his right arm and eye, he had lost none of his daring, and determined at any risk to place a part of his fleet between the enemy and the land. The French fleet was commanded by Brueys, and consisted of thirteen ships of the line and four frigates, whilst the British consisted of thirteen seventy-fours and one fifty-gun ship. Nelson gave the signal for attack, when the *Culloden*, getting too near the shore, grounded at the commencement of the action, which did not begin till 6 P.M. The enemy's fleet was soon between two fires, and, in less than two hours, four of the French ships struck. Brueys, the French Admiral, was killed, and his flagship, *L'Orient*, of 120 guns, now took fire, and blew up with such a fearful explosion, that it caused both sides to cease firing for a few minutes. The battle continued through the night, and, at the break of day, the only French ships which had their colours flying were the *Timoleon* and *Tonnant*; the latter surrendered, and the former was fired and abandoned by her crew. Admiral Villeneuve had during the night contrived to escape with four ships. Thus ended the battle of the Nile, in which the French lost thirteen vessels, and about 2,000 killed and wounded; and their army saw with dismay that the means of returning to their own country were cut off.

138-9. **If aught of......divine**, if anything that happens

on earth interest the spirit of one who has left it for heavenly scenes. **Touch,** move or affect.

140. **There,** among things divine; in heaven.

145. **The proof and......fame.** The poet means that true earthly fame consists in a man's memory being honoured by his countrymen in general: their voice recites his deeds, and, by reciting them, proves his title to fame.

147. **Civic revel,** public banquet.

149. **With honour, honour......name.** For the repetition, compare Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*, ll. 61—5:

> He sung Darius great and good,
> By too severe a fate
> Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
> Fallen from his high estate.

VII.

152. **A people,** a nation—not a mob or a herd of slaves.

153-4. **Tho' all men......Powers**—alluding to the recent political convulsions and disturbances in Europe. In 1848 a political earthquake shook the whole of Europe to its centre. On the 23rd February, Louis Philippe abdicated in favour of the Count of Paris; a Republic was proclaimed, and the French King and Royal Family, with difficulty, escaped to England. The mob took possession of the Tuileries and Palais Royal, and destroyed every thing belonging to Louis Philippe. On the 21st December, 1848, Louis Napoleon Bonaparte (afterwards Napoleon III) was proclaimed President, and took the oath of allegiance to the French Republic. Risings also took place in Vienna, Berlin, and Rome. **Brainless,** unreasoning; irrational. **Lawless Powers**—alluding to the state of France. As we have just said, Louis Napoleon got himself elected President of the French Republic in December 1848; but his election, notwithstanding the immense majority of votes in his favour, was far from appeasing the spirit of party which raged throughout the nation. Scarcely had the result of the appeal that had been made to the people been announced, when plotting commenced. Early in 1849 the Assembly was dissolved, and a new election took place, which resulted rather in a balance of parties than in the predominance of any one political element, although most of the leading democrats were amongst

the excluded. This circumstance excited the rage of the clubs, and plans were forthwith put in motion for an insurrection. An attempt of this character, under the direction of Ledru Rollin, was made on the 13th of June, but was instantly suppressed; and a similar revolt in Lyons, on the day following, was at once put down by artillery, yet not without the sacrifice of a great number of lives. These events greatly strengthened the position of the President, whose dependence from the first had been placed rather on the troops than on any party, and he now defied the assembly, by electing a ministry altogether irrespective of them or their debates. From that hour parliamentary government was at an end; all real power was vested in one man; the assembly coalesced, and protested, and became violent, but gained nothing, while the President day by day strengthened the army, and sought to ally its interests firmly with his own—an object which he before long fully accomplished, and with consummate skill. The year 1851 disclosed to the French nation the extent of the power they had allowed to centre in the Prince President, and witnessed the final triumph of his plans for the attainment of absolute rule. On the 26th of November, the Assembly, under the influence of despair, secretly resolved to denounce the President, and to declare his powers terminated; and on the same day the leading officers of the army (with the exception of Generals Cavaignac, Lamoriciere, and Changarnier), privately pledged each other to support him. The question to be decided was, Who could first successfully accomplish a *coup d' etat*, which all parties now saw was inevitable? The President was the victor. On the 2nd of December, 1851, Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, the President, whose tenure of office was to have expired the following May, under the pretext of 'saving society,' assailed the legislative power, arrested the representatives, drove out the Assembly, dissolved the Council of State, expelled the High Court of Justice, suppressed laws, swept the streets of Paris with grape-shot, and terrorised France. On the 1st of January, 1852, Louis was elected President for ten years by the votes of above seven millions of the people; and a few days afterwards, eighty-three members of the late Assembly were banished from France, and about six hundred of the disaffected were shipped to Cayenne. On the anniversary of the *coup d' etat*, 2nd December, 1852, Napoleon was proclaimed Emperor of the

French as Napoleon III; but the poet could, of course, make no allusion here to this consummation as it did not take place till just a fortnight after the *Ode* was written.

154. **Isled us here,** placed us here, encompassed by the ocean, and isolated from the rest of Europe. **Roughly set**—a metaphor from roughly setting a stone, with an implied allusion to Britain's "blown seas and storming showers." **His Briton.** The expression implies that God has specially favoured the Briton by placing him where he is.

155. **Blown,** agitated by stormy winds; stormy, **Storming,** descending with stormy violence.

157. **Regret**—at losing them.

159. **From brute control,** free from the unreasoning force of mobs and tyrants There seems to be an allusion here to the Chartist demonstration of 1848. The Revolutions on the Continent at the beginning of that year roused the Chartists of England, who got up a Monster Petition which they professed contained 5,700,000 signatures. On the 10th April, 1848, the Chartists were to meet on Kensington Common, and form a procession to the House of Commons, where the Petition was to be presented by Feargus O'Connor. One hundred and seventy thousand special constables were sworn in, the Bank fortified, the shops closed, and every means taken to prevent a riot. The Chartists met, but the arm of the law was too strong for them, and before night they vanished like smoke.

160-61. **The eye, the soul of Europe**—appellations expressive of the influence of England on the moral, intellectual, and political progress of the world, many of the institutions of other countries being modelled on those of England, as Parliamentary representation and a free press for example: see ll. 166-9. Athens was termed the "eye of Greece" on account of having been its intellectual centre. **Whole,** not divided against itself; not torn by factions.

162-3. **The one true......throne,** the only true source of freedom, namely, the mutual attachment between the people and their ancient line of kings.

164. **Sober freedom**—not unbridled liberty (like that which the French revolutionists, for example, considered as freedom). **Sober,** restrained within reasonable bounds; self-controlled.

165. **Loyal passion for,** enthusiastic or ardent feeling of loyalty to—a poetical inversion of "passionate loyalty." **Temperate Kings,** kings whose power is limited by constitutional principles. England, we need hardly say, is a *limited* monarchy, in the best sense of the term.

166. **Saving that,** when you save that (the one true seed of freedom). **Mankind,** the whole human race. The poet is again referring to the leading part which England has taken in promoting the advancement of the race.

167. **Crumbled into dust,** destroyed entirely; put an end to altogether.

168. **Drill,** train or discipline—agreeing with *ye.* **Raw,** unpractised or inexperienced. **The march of mind,** rapid intellectual progress. "The march of intellect" is the usual phrase.

169. **Crowds.** Note that they are called *crowds,* not *mobs*; for if they became sane, they would no longer be mobs. **Sane,** having the regular exercise of reason and other faculties of the mind—opposed to *brainless* in l. 153. **Crowns,** kings—metonymy. The epithet is opposed to *lawless* in l. 153.

170. **Wink no......overtrust,** no longer shut your danger, and remain inactive through excess of confidence there is no danger.

After this line, came in the first edition, the followin lines, afterwards omitted:

> "Perchance our greatness will increase,
> Perchance a darkening future yields,
> Some reverse from worse to worse,
> The blood of men in quiet fields,
> And sprinkled on the sheaves of peace."

The reference in the omitted lines was to the throwing out by the Commons on the 20th February 1852 of the Militia Bill, which was brought in by the Government in view of a threatened French invasion.

172. **He bad you...coasts.** The *Morning Chronicle* published on the 4th January 1848 a letter on national defences addressed to Sir John Burgoyne by the Duke of Wellington, in January 1847:

"Some days have elapsed—indeed a fortnight has—since I received your note, with a copy of your observations on the possible results of a war with France, under our present system of military preparation. You

are aware that I have for years been sensible of the alteration produced in maritime warfare and operations by the application of steam to the propelling of ships at sea......I have in vain endeavoured to awaken the attention of different administrations to this state of things, as well known to our neighbours as it is to ourselves......I have examined and reconnoitred over and over again the whole coast from the North Foreland by Dover, Folkestone, Beachy Head, Brighton, Arundel, to Selsey Bill near Portsmouth, and I say that, excepting immediately under the fire of Dover Castle, there is not a spot on the coast on which infantry might not be thrown on shore at any time of the tide, with any wind and in any weather, and from which such body of infantry, so thrown on shore, would not find, within the distance of five miles, a road into the interior of the country through the cliffs practicable for the march of troops......When did any man hear of allies of a country unable to defend itself? Views of economy of some, and I admit that the high views of national finance of others induce them to postpone those measures absolutely necessary for mere defence and safety under existing circumstances, forgetting altogether the common practice of successful armies, in modern times, imposing upon the conquered enormous pecuniary contributions, as well as other valuable and ornamental property. Do we suppose that we should be allowed to keep—could we advance a pretension to keep—more than the islands composing the United Kingdom; ceding disgracefully the Channel Islands on which an invader has never established himself since the period of the Norman Conquest? I am bordering upon seventy-seven years of age passed in honour; I hope that the Almighty may pro- ... from being witness of the tragedy which I cannot persuade my ...mporaries to take measures to avert"

Sacred, inviolable; not to be profaned by the foot of an ...nvader. Compare "the inviolate sea" in the lines *To the Queen.*

173. **Moulder,** are wasting away by disuse; are rusting. **The seaward wall,** that is, the batteries along the southern coast of England.

175. **Tempests lour,** storms threaten. The storms referred to are, of course, invasions.

176-7. **Even if they broke in thunder,** even if those storms should burst on the land with the utmost violence.

178. **And the Man who spoke,** and remember the character of the man who spoke.

179. **Who never sold......hour,** who never sacrificed truth to present advantage.

180. **Nor paltered......power,** nor trifled with his conscience from a love of power. Trifling with conscience is called "paltering with Eternal God," because conscience is, as

it were, the representative of God in our hearts. **Wellington,** as one of his biographers says, was hated by the French (after the restoration of the Bourbons) on account of his integrity. His honesty was above suspicion; he was beyond the reach of all bribes.

181-2. **Who let the turbid......low,** who never troubled himself about any discreditable rumours that might be circulated about him whether among the higher or the lower orders. **Turbid,** muddy; foul.

183-4. **Whose life was work,** who devoted his life to work. **Whose language......life.** Some of Wellington's sayings are often quoted, as for example: "A great country ought never to make little wars." "The history of a battle is like the history of a ball." "Be discreet in all things, and so render it unnecessary to be mysterious about any." **Rife with,** abounding with; full of. **Hewn from life,** drawn from experience.

185. **Who never spoke against a foe.** Wellington gave his enemies the praise they deserved. For instance, he considered Massena the ablest of the French marshals, f "always found him where he least desired that he shoul But it is not correct to say that he "*never* spoke against a for he said of Soult that "he never knew when to strik which was certainly depreciating Soult's military skill. An he did scant justice to Napoleon's genius.

186-7. **Whose eighty winters......right,** whose life of eighty years, free from ambition and devoted to duty, forms a crushing rebuke to all who, in seeking their own selfish and ambitious ends, violate all principles of justice. **Great self-seekers,** self-seekers on a large scale, like Napoleon for example. *Self-seekers,* persons who seek only their own interest.

188. **Our England's Alfred,** Alfred the Great (849-901), sixth king of England, of the Saxon dynasty. He ascended the throne in 871, at the age of 23. He at first conquered the Danes; but, having been defeated by them, he, concealing himself under the garb of a minstrel, entered their camp in order to gain such knowledge as might enable him to conquer them. This bold step was rewarded with success. Aided by the knowledge he had gained, he succeeded in overcoming his formidable enemies. London which was still in their power, he took in

894; and, by his skill, he secured the tranquillity of England. He civilized the country, established laws, introduced trial by jury, and divided the land into counties. He also revived arts, sciences, and letters; composed several works with his own pen; made commerce and navigation flourish, and laid the foundation of the maritime power of England.

189. **Truth-lover was our English Duke.** "He was the truest of men, and even in the despatches and bulletins which he had occasion to compose, amidst the excitements of victory, there is never to be traced a feeling in the slightest degree allied to vapouring or even self-complacency. It was not in respect of stricken fields alone, that he proved himself the superior of Napoleon. He was his superior in every moral attribute."

190-91. **Whatever record......shamed,** whatever records of his life may be discovered, they will not reveal anything which will reflect discredit on him. In illustration of this we may mention that Wellington's Despatches, published by Colonel Gurwood, in 12 volumes, are the proudest monument of his glory; they exhibit him as a commander who overcame countless difficulties by honesty, sagacity, singleness and [illegible]ncy of purpose, and devotion to duty. Throughout his [illegible] career, he appears the same honourable and upright man, [illegible]oted to the service of his sovereign and country, and just [illegible]nd considerate to all those who served under him.

VIII.

194. **Followed by the brave of other lands.** The Duke's colours were carried before his coffin by the *foreign marshals* present: see the *Introductory Note*. He was, speaking literally, *preceded* by "the brave of other lands"; but the poet would not be guilty of such a bathos.

195-6. **On whom from both......stars,** on whom honours and distinctions were lavishly bestowed. **Stars,** decorations of knightly orders. Wellington had numerous orders conferred on him by Prussia, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, &c., besides his own country. He was a knight of the Garter, a knight-grand-cross of the Bath, and a knight of all the most distinguished foreign orders.

197. **Affluent fortune......horn**—referring to the sums which Parliament at different times voted him—about £700,000

in all. **Her horn.** The allusion is to the Cornucopia (or horn of plenty), which is generally placed in the hands of emblematical figures of Fortune, Plenty, Liberality, &c., who are represented as pouring from it an abundance of fruits, corn, &c. It is frequently used both in architecture and heraldry. On the arms of banks, and other public institutions, it is often represented pouring forth coins. The goddess Fortune is represented on ancient monuments with a horn of plenty, and sometimes two in her hands. She is blindfolded, and generally holds a wheel in her hands as an emblem of her inconstancy. Sometimes she appears with wings, and treads upon the prow of a ship, and holds a rudder in her hands.

199-200. **Who cares not......state,** who desires no greatness except that which consists in saving or serving one's country. **But as,** except as.

201. **Not once or twice**—but many times. **Rough island-story**—refers to war, while "*fair* island-story" in l. 209, refers to peace.

202. **The path...of glory,** glory was attained by simple devotion to duty. Compare Tennyson's *Œnone*, 142-8:

> "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
> These three alone lead life to sovereign power
> Yet not for power (power of herself
> Would come uncall'd) but to live by law,
> Acting the law we live by without fear,
> And, because right is right, to follow right
> Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence."

203. **He**—repeated in l. 206. **Walks it,** treads the path of duty.

204. **Deaden**, deprive of vigour or force; crush or subdue.

205. **Before his journey closes,** before his earthly career is ended; before his death.

206-8. **He shall find......garden-roses,** he shall find that his faithful discharge of the severe duties which were allotted to him, however painful at the time, will bring him delights which far surpass those of a voluptuous life of ease. **Purples**, purple flowers. The flowers of the thistle are generally purple, rarely white or yellowish. **Outredden**, excel in redness. Purple is a colour composed of *red* and blue, much esteemed for its richness and beauty. **Garden-roses**, grown with care in garden

209. **Fair, island-story.** See l. 202 and notes on l. 201. The poet is dividing those who have won glory by doing their duty, into two classes—the heroes of war, and the heroes of peace; for

> Peace hath her victories
> No less renowned than war. (*Milton.*)

213. **The long gorge,** the long and difficult path of duty. **The far light,** the bright goal to which he is working his way.

214. **And prevailed,** and been successful.

215-7. **Shall find the......sun,** shall find that his discharge of duty in the face of difficulty and danger has brought him that happiness which is the result of God's [illegible] and favour. **Toppling,** tumbling down. The "[illegible]counter of Duty" are the dangers and difficulties [illegible] he has scaled or in the discharge of duty. **Scale[illegible]** [illegible] **To which ou[illegible]......moon.** Compare St. John's description of the [illegible]eavenly Jerusalem: "And the city had no need of the [illegible]n, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it." (*Revelation*, XXI, 23).

221. **Colossal,** of huge size, that is, pre-eminently conspicuous. **Seen of,** seen by.

225. **The land whose......shame.** England which he saved from the dishonour of being invaded and conquered, by crushing Napoleon. **Hearths,** firesides; homes—the fireside being the spot around which the associations of home centre.

228. **When the long illumined cities flame,** when cities are illuminated on occasions of public rejoicing. **Long-illumined,** illuminated throughout their long lines of buildings.

229. **Iron leader's fame.** See note on l. 37.

IX.

232. **Peace,** let us be silent now; let us not speak of his fame now (but let us leave that to posterity).

233. **Some yet unmoulded tongue,** some poet not yet born.

236. **Patriarchal knee,** knee of a patriarch or venerable head of a family, like the patriarchs of the Bible.

237. **Late the little children clung.** Wellington was very fond of children, and delighted to please them in many little ways. One of the compliments which gratified him most in the whole of his long life was the admiring whisper of a little

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